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INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 2022

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
Vol. 53 • No. 205
14 pages • ₹6.00

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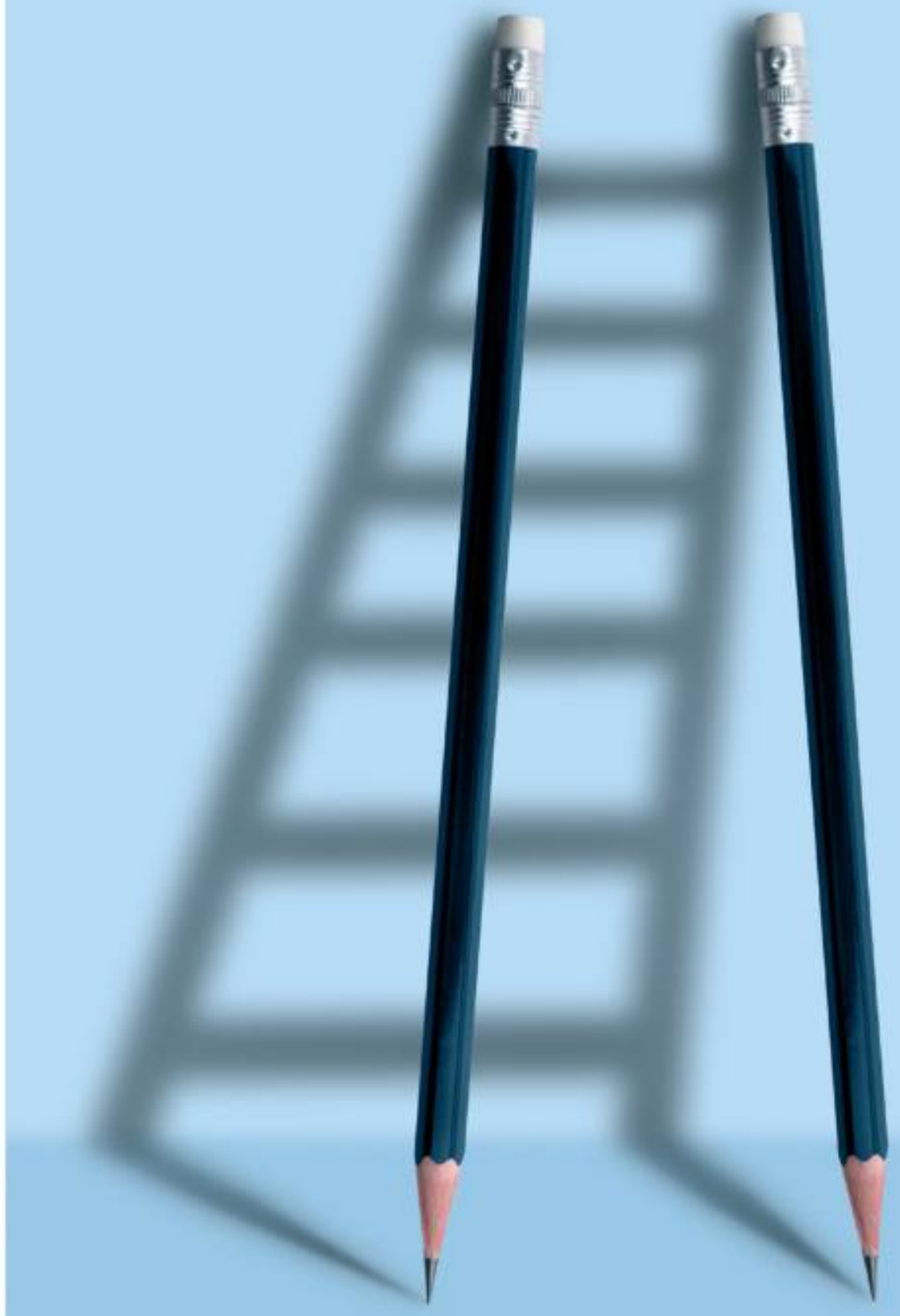

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Twin apartment towers in Noida brought down in an explosive flash
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India and China are in for a rocky period, says former Australian PM
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Telecom industry to tap into existing infra such as street lights for 5G
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All eyes on Serena, Nadal as U.S. Open gets under way today
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POCSO case against seer: Police begin investigation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BELAGAVI/BENGALURU

The Chitradurga police on Sunday began investigation into the allegations of sexual abuse of minor girls levelled against Murugha Mutt seer Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru, who has been booked under POCSO Act, amidst separate protests seeking justice both for the seer and the victims.

The statements of two girl victims, who were brought to Chitradurga from Mysuru, were recorded before the Child Welfare Committee and the police while a medical examination was also conducted.

The five accused, including the seer, are expected to be issued notices to depose before the police on Monday while provisions of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act are likely to be invoked against the seer as one of the victims belongs to a Scheduled Caste.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai was cautious in his response to the charges against the seer. He said that the investigation would bring out the truth while his predecessor B.S. Yediyurappa termed the allegations against the seer as false.

DETAILS ▸ PAGE 4

EDUCATIONPLUS ▸ PAGE 3

Congress to elect its president on Oct. 17

Anand Sharma questions sanctity of electoral rolls

SANDEEP PHUKAN
SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The Congress will hold the election to the post of its president on October 17, the party announced here on Sunday after the election schedule was endorsed by the Congress Working Committee (CWC).

This was the first meeting of the CWC after the exit of the party's longest-serving general secretary, Ghulam Nabi Azad. But in the brief virtual meeting, none of the members raised his exit or expressed solidarity with the Gandhi family, which was at the centre of Mr. Azad's attack in his resignation letter. There were also no fresh appeals from CWC members to Mr. Gandhi to return as party president.

Chairing the meeting, Ms. Gandhi said it was only to discuss the schedule and no other issue would be taken up. Mr. Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were seen on one screen, but did not speak during the brief meeting. The entire CWC, including former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, attended the meeting that lasted for less than 30 minutes.

The president's post has been with the Gandhi family for over two decades now. As reported by *The Hindu*, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot is the front runner for the post, after the Gandhi family's decision not to contest. The election process will begin on September 24 and culminate on October 17, where in case of a contest, votes will be cast. The electoral college has over 9,000 delegates.

During the meeting, according to sources, senior party leader Anand Sharma, a prominent member of the G-23 group, questioned the sanctity of the electoral rolls. He said he had received complaints from colleagues from different States that they were in the dark about the meetings of primary members at the block- and district-committee levels who elected the delegates for the elections.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Bracing for the ballot

The Congress Working Committee on Sunday decided to hold an election to the post of party president, if more than one candidate file the nomination papers

KEY DATES

Notification: September 22
Filing of nominations: September 24 to 30
Scrutiny of papers: October 1
Last date of withdrawal: October 8
Election: October 17
Counting and declaration of result: October 19

Countdown begins: (From right) Jairam Ramesh, Madhusudan Mistry, chairman, Central Election Authority of the Congress, and K.C. Venugopal addressing presspersons in New Delhi on Sunday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

J&K UNIT'S MEETING ▸ PAGE 9

Winning (h)it!

Star of the night: Hardik Pandya seals it with a six in a humdinger against Pakistan in the Asia Cup in Dubai on Sunday. Chasing a target of 148, India survived some anxious moments before reaching home with two balls to spare. Hardik had earlier scalped three wickets. • AFP

Data protection Bill likely to be presented in Budget Session

VARGHESE K. GEORGE
YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The draft of the revised data protection Bill will be released for consultation soon with the government planning to present it in Parliament during the Budget Session next year, Minister for Telecom and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw said.

In an interview with *The Hindu*, the Minister stressed that the country's data protection framework should be in tune with the modern times and not look like an attempt to "create a paper system for a digital world".

The government, earlier this month, withdrew the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, in the Lok Sabha, reasoning that it will come up with a fresh Bill. "The principles of data protection and privacy are now well established all over the world and the government is more or less practising those principles ever since the honourable Supreme Court gave the judgment," he said.

FULL INTERVIEW ▸ PAGE 9

India refers to Taiwan Strait 'militarisation'

ANANTH KRISHNAN
BEIJING

India has for the first time referred to what it called "the militarisation of the Taiwan Strait", marking a rare instance of New Delhi appearing to comment on China's actions towards Taiwan.

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Flood affected

33 In million, the number of people (out of an estimated total population of 230 million) who were affected by the floods in Pakistan, according to the country's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The flood's death toll (since June 2022), as of Sunday, has now crossed the 1,000 mark. As many as 116 districts were affected, with 66 of them officially declared as "calamity hit", according to *The Dawn* newspaper. Pakistan, had on August 25, declared a state of emergency due to the flooding in the country. THE ECONOMIST

No respite

99 The number of days since the last petrol price revision in India, which happened on May 22. This is despite the fact that crude oil prices (India basket) have dropped by $20 per barrel during the same period. The fact that most oil marketing companies (OMCs) have experienced losses in the first quarter, due to multiple lowered costs of fuel at a time when crude prices were rising, could be the reason for the unchanged prices. The three OMCs - IOC, BPCL, and HPCL- have reported a combined loss of ₹18,480 crore in the quarter ending June.

Clashes in Libya

30 The number of people killed in clashes in Libya, ending the Tripoli-based government's months long stretch of relative calm. The fighting broke out early Saturday and pitted militias loyal to the Tripoli-based government against other armed groups allied with a rival administration that wants to be seated in the capital. Libya has plunged into chaos ever since a NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Muammar Qadhafi in 2011. The oil-rich county has for years been split between rival administrations. AP

Century of T20s

100 The number of T20 international games that Indian batting stalwart Virat Kohli has featured in, after playing for the Indian team against Pakistan in the Asia Cup 2022 in Dubai on Saturday. He is the only player other than New Zealand's Ross Taylor to have played more than or equal to 100 Tests, 100 ODIs and 100 T20Is. His batting average is just below 50 (49.53) in Tests, 57.68 in ODIs and just above 50 in T20Is. Mr. Kohli is the 14th international cricketer to reach the milestone of 100 T20Is.

Aiding Africa

30 In $ billion, the amount Japan has pledged in aid for development in Africa, saying it wants to work more closely with the continent, as the rules-based international order is under threat after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Addressing a Japan-Africa summit in Tunisia, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Tokyo would work to ensure grain shipments to Africa amid a global shortage. Tunisia is itself in need of financial support as it faces a crisis in public finances that has worsened by the global squeeze on commodities. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

The concerns around Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage

Why is the Election Commission keen on voters linking their Aadhaar with voter IDs?

THE GIST

- There have been instances of block officers mandating the linking of Aadhar with Voter IDs after the Election Commission's campaign to promote the linkage of Voter ID and Aadhaar which began on August 1.
- Form 6B provides the format in which Aadhaar information may be submitted to the electoral registration officer. However, the option to submit other listed documents is exercisable only if the voter is "not able to furnish their Aadhaar number because they do not have an Aadhaar number".
- Civil society has highlighted that linking of the two databases of electoral rolls and Aadhaar could lead to the linkage of Aadhaar's "demographic" information with voter ID information, and lead to violation of the right to privacy and surveillance measures by the state.

TRISHEE GOYAL

The story so far: Reports have surfaced online of instances where block level officers have asked individuals to link their Aadhaar with their Voter IDs, failing which their Voter IDs could be cancelled. This comes in the aftermath of the Election Commission's (EC) campaign to promote the linkage of Voter ID and Aadhaar that began on August 1. In the first ten days since its launch, the campaign saw almost 2.5 crore Aadhaar holders voluntarily submitting their details to the EC.

Why does the government want this?
The EC conducts regular exercises to maintain an updated and accurate record of the voter base. A part of this exercise is to weed out duplication of voters, such as migrant workers who may have been registered more than once on the electoral rolls in different constituencies or for persons registered multiple times within the same constituency. As per the government, linkage of Aadhaar with voter IDs will assist in ensuring that only one Voter ID is issued per citizen of India.

Is the linking of Aadhaar with one's Voter ID mandatory?
In December 2021, Parliament passed the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021 to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950, inter alia. Section 23(4) was inserted in the Representation of the People Act, 1950. It states that the electoral registration officer may "for the purpose of establishing the identity of any person" or "for the purposes of authentication of entries in electoral roll of more than one constituency or more than once in the same constituency" for citizens already enrolled, require them to furnish their Aadhaar numbers.

To reflect this amendment, in June 2022, the government notified changes to the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. Rule 26B was added to provide that "every person whose name is listed in the roll may intimate his Aadhar number to the registration officer". Although, the use of discretionary language throughout the amendments have been accompanied by assurances by both the government and the EC that linkage of the Aadhaar with Voter ID is optional, this does not seem to be reflected in Form 6B issued under the new Rule 26B.

Form 6B provides the format in which Aadhaar information may be submitted to the electoral registration officer. Form 6B provides the voter to either submit their Aadhaar number or any other listed document. However, the option to submit other listed documents is exercisable only if the voter is "not able to furnish their Aadhaar number because they do not have an Aadhaar number". To that extent, the element of choice that has been incorporated in the amendments seem to be negated or at the very least thrown into confusion.

Why is the mandatory linking of Aadhaar to the Voter ID an issue?
The preference to use Aadhaar for verification and authentication, both by the state and private sector, stems from two reasons. First, at the end of 2021, 99.7% of the adult Indian population had an Aadhaar card. This coverage exceeds that of any other officially valid document such as driver's licence, ration cards, PAN cards etc that are mostly applied for specific purposes. Second, since Aadhaar allows for biometric authentication, Aadhaar based authentication and verification is considered more reliable, quicker and cost efficient when compared to other IDs.

But these reasons do not suffice the mandating of Aadhaar except in limited circumstances as per the *Puttaswamy* judgment. It needs to be considered whether such mandatory linkage of Aadhaar with Voter ID would pass the test of being "necessary and proportionate" to the purpose of de-duplication which is sought to be achieved. In *Puttaswamy*, one of the questions that the Supreme Court explored was whether the mandatory linking of Aadhaar with bank accounts was constitutional or not. The Court observed that the mandatory linking of Aadhaar with bank accounts was not only for new bank accounts but also existing ones, failing which the individual will not be able to operate their bank account. The Court held that depriving a person of their right to property for non-linkage fell foul of the test of proportionality. Even though the situation at hand is slightly different in that other means of verification and authentication are allowed if the person does not hold an Aadhaar, given the wide coverage of Aadhaar, the current design would in effect mandate Aadhaar linkage. In this context, it needs to be considered whether requiring an Aadhaar holder to mandatorily provide Aadhaar for authentication or verification would not be considered violative of their informational autonomy (right to privacy) which would allow them to decide which official document they want to use for verification and authentication.

Moreover, in *Lal Babu Hussein* (1995), the Supreme Court had held that the Right to vote cannot be disallowed by insisting only on four proofs of identity – voters can rely on any other proof of identity and obtain the right to vote.

What are the operational difficulties?
First, the preference to Aadhaar for the purposes of determining voters is puzzling as Aadhaar is only a proof of residence and not a proof of citizenship. Therefore, verifying voter identity against this will only help in tackling duplication but will not remove voters who are not citizens of India from the electoral rolls.

Second, the estimate of error rates in biometric based authentication differ widely. As per the Unique Identification Authority of India in 2018, Aadhaar based biometric authentication had a 12% error rate. This led the Supreme Court to hold in *Puttaswamy* that a person would not be denied of benefits in case Aadhaar based authentication could not take place. This concern is also reflected in the previous experiences of using Aadhaar to clean electoral rolls. A similar exercise undertaken in 2015 in Andhra and Telangana led to the disenfranchisement of around 30 lakh voters before the Supreme Court stalled the process of linkage.

Lastly, civil society has highlighted that linking of the two databases of electoral rolls and Aadhaar could lead to the linkage of Aadhaar's "demographic" information with voter ID information, and lead to violation of the right to privacy and surveillance measures by the state. This, however, would seem to be the case with the use of any other officially valid document to verify or authenticate the identity of the voter. This would leave the EC with the option of verifying its information only through door-to-door checks. It also needs to be noted that the *Puttaswamy* judgment, after reviewing the Aadhaar architecture, held that the use of biometric based authentication and verification, did not lead to the creation of a "surveillance state". To address these concerns, one needs to have enforceable data protection principles that regulate how authentication data will be used.

What is the way forward?
Even as the amendments have been made and the EC has launched a campaign for linkage, a writ petition has filed with the Supreme Court challenging the same. It challenges the amendments as being violative of the right to privacy. The Supreme Court has transferred the writ to the Delhi High Court.

In the meantime, it is important that the government clarifies through correction in Form 6B that the linking is not mandatory and expedites the enactment of a data protection legislation that allays concerns of unauthorised processing of personal data held by the government.

The writer is a research fellow at the Centre for Applied Law and Technology Research, Vidhi Centre for legal policy

Link-up: Women show their Aadhaar cards before casting their vote at a polling centre in Visakhapatnam in 2021. • DEEPAK K. R.

EXPLAINER

Revisiting the *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu* judgment

What is the significance of this judgment in the context of the current debate surrounding freebies by political parties?

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

The story so far: On Friday, the Supreme Court referred to a three-judge Bench a series of petitions seeking a judicial direction that political parties who make "wild" promises of largesse should also reveal in their poll manifestos where they will get the money to pay for them. The reference is a shift from the court's own stand in the *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu* judgment of 2013.

What happened?
In the Balaji case judgment, a Division Bench of the Supreme Court had held that making promises in election manifestos do not amount to a 'corrupt practice' under Section 123 of the Representation of People Act (RP).

However, the Supreme Court is now worried that freebies promised by political parties to win elections could bleed the public exchequer dry. The Court said that parties who form the government riding the wave created by their pre-poll promises of "free gifts" are bleeding the State finances dry by actually trying to fulfil their outlandish promises using public money.

The Supreme Court has therefore decided to revisit the Balaji verdict.

What triggered the Balaji case?
The course of events started in 2006, during the run-up to the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) released its election manifesto announcing a scheme of free distribution of colour television sets (CTVs) to "each and every household" which did not have one if the party was voted to power. The party justified that the TV would "provide recreation and general knowledge to household women, more particularly, those living in the rural areas". The party swept to power in the polls and decided to implement its scheme and portioned off ₹750 crore from the budget for the project. The government finally distributed 30,000 TV sets across the State. In 2011, rival All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and its alliance also announced its election manifesto with free gifts to "equalise" the gifts offered by the DMK. AIADMK promised grinders, mixies, electric fans, laptop computers, four gram gold thalis, a cheque of ₹50,000 for women's marriage, green houses, 20 kg of rice to ration card holders (even to those above

the poverty line) and free cattle and sheep. Mr. Balaji, a resident of Tamil Nadu, challenged the schemes introduced by the parties in the Madras High Court. He said the expenditure to be incurred by the State from the exchequer was "unauthorised, impermissible and ultra vires the constitutional mandates". The High Court dismissed his case, following which he had moved the apex court.

How did the case play out?
Mr. Balaji, represented by senior advocate Arvind Datar, said the State cannot act in furtherance of "eccentric principles of socialistic philanthropy". He argued that the promises of free distribution of non-essential commodities in an election manifesto amounts to electoral bribe under Section 123 of the RP Act. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has a duty to examine expenditures even before they are deployed. Money can be taken out of the Consolidated Fund of the State only for "public purposes". The distribution of goods to certain sections of people was violative of Article 14 of the Constitution.

In response, the State of Tamil Nadu countered that promises of political parties do not constitute corrupt practice. Political parties are not the State and 'freebies' is a nebulous term which has no legal status. The promises implemented by the party after forming the government is an obligation under the Directives Principles of State Policy. The State is only doing its duty to promote the welfare of its people. The promises are implemented by framing various schemes/guidelines/eligibility criteria etc. as well as with the approval of the legislature. Thus, it cannot be construed as a waste of public money or be prohibited by any statute or scheme.

The court's judgment held that promises by a political party cannot constitute a 'corrupt practice' on its part. It would be "misleading" to construe that all promises in the election manifesto would amount to corrupt practice. The manifesto of a political party is a statement of its policy. The question of implementing the manifesto arises only if the political party forms a government. It is the promise of a future government and not of an individual candidate. However, the court agreed that freebies create an "uneven playing field". It had asked the Election Commission of India to consult political parties and issue guidelines on the election manifesto and make it a part of the Model Code of Conduct.

Why is the Court's move to review the Balaji judgment significant?
In its order, the court foresees that "freebies may create a situation wherein the State government cannot provide basic amenities due to lack of funds and the State is pushed towards imminent bankruptcy". The court said it wants a transparent debate before the three-judge Bench on whether an "enforceable" judicial order can stop political parties from promising and distributing 'irrational freebies'. The case is unique as the Supreme Court is exploring whether judicial parameters can be set on a purely political act of promising freebies.

THE GIST

- The Supreme Court referred to a three-judge Bench a series of petitions seeking a judicial direction that political parties who make "wild" promises of largesse should also reveal in their poll manifestos where they will get the money to pay for them.
- The 2013 *Balaji* judgment states that election manifesto promises do not amount to 'corrupt practice' under Section 123 of the Representation of People Act.
- This revisit by the Supreme Court on its earlier judgment is unique as the court is exploring whether judicial parameters can be set on a purely political act of promising freebies.

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MONDAY, AUG. 29
RISE 06:08 SET 18:32
RISE 07:38 SET 20:05

TUESDAY, AUG. 30
RISE 06:08 SET 18:32
RISE 08:26 SET 20:42

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 31
RISE 06:08 SET 18:31
RISE 09:16 SET 21:22

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	22
Mysuru	30	20
Bengaluru	28	19

Bengaluru Today
27°C The weather will be comfortable and humid. Few spells of moderate rain and thundershower to occur. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C A comfortable but humid weather to prevail. Spell of moderate rain and thundershower will occur. Night will be pleasant.

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Text & Context
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- **Explained |** Revisiting the *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu* judgment bit.ly/tnverdict
- **Cache|** The cyber threat to mobile banking bit.ly/cybthreat
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Rain may have forced many to drop their travel plans

Officials of KSRTC, which operates additional services during Ganesha Chaturthi, say demand for online tickets lower than that in previous years

A file photo of a flooded road in Banashankari 6th Stage, Bengaluru.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Every year, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) operates additional services during Ganesha Chaturthi anticipating that there will be a huge rush. This year, however, officials say demand for online tickets is lower than that in previous years. Incessant rain might be forcing Bengalureans to drop their plans of venturing out of the city or people may be relying on private vehicles to move out.

A KSRTC official said, "Usually, one or two days prior to the festival we see a rise in demand for online reservation of tickets. Last year, it touched up to 20,000 but this time till Sunday, we received booking up to 10,000. The city receiving heavy rainfall might be forcing people to stay indoors and drop their plans of going to their native places. This time, Ganesh Chaturthi has come in the middle of the week. Usually, people look for long weekends to go out – this could be another factor."

The official added that there was also no significant rise in demand for buses operated on inter-State routes.

The corporation had planned to run additional 500 buses to clear rush, but till Sunday tickets were reserved for 40 buses on Monday and 67 buses on Tuesday. The KSRTC charges 20% extra fare on additional buses. Additional buses are operated on both intra-State and inter-State routes.

Minister warns of action
Transport Minister B. Sriramulu has warned of action against private bus operators for charging exorbitant fares to ferry passengers from Bengaluru to different destinations.

In a series of tweets, the Minister said, "It has come to my notice that private bus operators are charging hefty fares for passengers travelling to their native places. Bus operators should charge fixed rates. In case anyone is found collecting excess fare, legal action will be initiated against them."

In private sector
However, there seems to be no demand in the private sector either. A private bus operator, Nataraj Sharma, said, "Travel demand has significantly dropped this year. Operators have not hiked the fare; the normal fare is being collected from passengers but we don't see any rise in demand for the tickets online. Rain cannot be the only reason; people who have spent over two years in their native places may not be visiting this festive season. After the pandemic, people have gone through financial distress, this could have also resulted in they cancelling travel plans or having low-key celebrations."

Campaign to make 'clay seed Ganesha' idols sets a record

People of various age groups join hands to make 3,308 idols

SHUVAM ROY
LEESHA K. NAIR
BENGALURU

Participants making Ganesha idols at the National College Grounds in Bengaluru on Sunday. • LEESHA K. NAIR

The 'clay seed Ganesha' campaign, organised by Bengaluru Ganesh Utsava and Shree Vidyaranya Yuvaka Sangha, in association with the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board and Rotary Bangalore Parisara, claimed to have set a new Guinness World Record for 'the most number of people sculpting with modelling clay simultaneously' on Sunday at National College Grounds in Basavanagudi. Although the initial goal was set to create 10,000 Ganesha idols, only 3,308 idols could be created, making it to the records book.

"We are elated because we have broken our own record that we had created three years ago. We would like to do this more and more. We couldn't reach our desired number, but I'm glad that we could set a new benchmark," said Nandish Mariyappa, managing trustee of Bengaluru Ganesh Utsava.

The campaign saw over 3,000 people of various age groups and from different professions joining hands to sculpt their personal Ganesha idols. Idol-making materials such as clay, sculpting popsicle sticks, plant seeds, and water were provided at the venue. Many professional artist volunteers were also assisting participants. The live screening of the sculpting procedure by an artist was also organised. Seeds of plants such as tulsi, ashwagandha, sunflower and other flowering plants were provided for embedding within the idols. QR codes were also allocated to individual idols.

To create awareness
"We are so happy about the Guinness record. It's a milestone for the KSPCB because we had planned to execute this systematically and create awareness about environmental pollution. We have all created our green Ganapa and seed Ganapa. This has been a success not only because of the record but also because of it being environment friendly," said Shanth A. Thimmaiah, KSPCB Chairman.

While some among the volunteers were first-time idol-makers, for others it is an annual affair. "I have made something like this for the first time. Making a few parts of it was difficult like the trunk and the ears. But I enjoyed my time here," said Tanvi Jain, a 13-year-old student. Suman Jayaprakash, a yoga instructor, said, "I have been making such idols for more than five years at home. I know the basics of idol-making but this is something new because so many people are involved in the process."

The clay idols which were made can be planted in a pot post the festivities, which will then turn into plants. Apart from being environment-friendly, the campaign also aimed to provide a hands-on clay idol-making experience.

"When you create something with your own hands and give so much love and affection to it, the experience stays with you for a very long time," said Nagesh Sidhanti from Rotary Bangalore Parisara.

While the campaign has broken its previous record of creating 2,138 idols, the prediction for the same had already been made. "Before even the event started, we saw more than 3,000 people settling in. And from where I was sitting, I could see that they would exceed their previous score of 2,138. But then we had to wait for the other judges to count and know the actual number. But I knew that they would create a new record," said Rishi Nath, an adjudicator from the Guinness World Records.

Idol-makers at Pottery Town hope for better business this festive season

Wide variety of idols on sale; metro work has led to space constraints, say sellers

LEESHA K. NAIR
BENGALURU

As the countdown for Ganesha Chaturti celebrations, after two pandemic-hit years, begins, idol-makers of Pottery Town are busy applying finishing touches to their creations. A wide variety of Ganesha idols have been kept on display for the festival, which will be celebrated on Wednesday.

Amid idols of various designs, the one with traditional Maharashtrian Peta, decorated with rhinestones, attracted many. Apart from this, those painted with natural colours, plain brown idols, and those decorated with sequins and jewels also stood out.

The potters also provide idols based on the requirement of clients. The cost ranges from ₹75 for an 8-inch idol to ₹30,000 for those between 8 and 10 feet. The price depends on the size of the idol.

While there is a great diversity in the design, a decrease in the number of idols has been observed compared to the pre-pandemic times. Sellers said their business had taken a hit owing to space constraints caused by the construction of metro stations.

Less space
"I have travelled over 300 km to bring these huge eight idols from Tirupati. It had cost me over ₹30,000 for just these few idols. But it is so congested due to the metro construction that I cannot display too many idols. Previously, I could display most of my models but now there is hardly any space to put a shed and showcase them," said Abhishek, a seller near Pottery Town. The pandemic had also affected the livelihood of the traditional idol-makers. Their old stock has become damaged, discoloured, and is now unfit for sale.

Rain adds to woes
The monsoon also added more to their woes since the clay needs sunlight to dry. The process of creating new idols for this year's festival has drowned many in debt.

"It takes a year to make these idols. We had to undergo a huge loss during COVID-19. We took a loan from the bank to recover from our losses. We are using that money to sustain our business. If the business is good this year, then I can repay the debt. Otherwise, I don't know what to do. I have left it to God," says Jagadishwari, a shopkeeper.

Plaster of Paris (PoP) is not used in preparing the idols, but many still use it as an adhesive. PoP idols shipped from other States are still available, while the traditional idol-makers depend solely on clay and mud for preparing Ganesha idols.

A Ganesha idol stall on R.V. Road in Bengaluru, and (below) a woman giving final touches to Gowri and Ganesha idols. • PRERANA KULKARNI AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"PoP is definitely an easier option when compared to mud, and it also dries quickly. But then it doesn't dissolve in water easily. Mud and clay, on the other hand, dissolve in water very quickly and it goes back to nature, and then we extract the same clay next year, so the cycle continues. I have always been environment-oriented and have never used PoP," said Dinakaran M.A., a pottery shop owner.

Along with the idol-makers, customers are also preparing to celebrate the festival after a long wait. "It was an amazing experience to come here for the first time, as I got to see a variety of idols being prepared from pure clay. The prices were also reasonable compared to Mumbai as I was buying it straight from the makers," said Shivani Kulkarni, a pilot from Mumbai.

CCB raids hookah bar on Church Street

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The CCB on Saturday raided a hookah bar, Blow, on Church Street and seized hookahs and flavoured tobacco worth ₹80,000.

According to CCB officials, the management violated COTPA provisions.

The Home Department has prohibited hookah bars for also promoting substance abuse. The CCB has booked a case against the owner and manager of the bar.

Annual limb camp from Sept. 15 to 18

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The 2nd annual limb camp – free artificial limb (Jaipur foot)/arm to amputees and calipers for polio-affected people – will be held from September 15 to 18.

The camp will be held at Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Kalyana Mantapa, Pampa Mahakavi Road, Shankarpuram. For details, call 9880007877.

THE HINDU
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Techie among two killed in separate accidents

His bike rammed a parked car

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A 26-year-old IT firm employee was killed and his friend injured when the rider lost control over the motorcycle they were riding and rammed a parked car at HSR Layout on Saturday night.

The deceased, Akshay, a native of Kerala and resident of HSR Layout, was returning home late in the night with his friend Ameez, 27, when the accident occurred.

Akshay was riding allegedly in a rash and negligent manner while it was raining and the riders were not wearing the helmet, the police, quoting an autorickshaw driver who witnessed the accident, said.

The duo, in a bid to overtake the autorickshaw, lost control and rammed a car parked on the roadside with parking indicators on. Due to the impact, the duo was thrown into the air and crashed on the road. Passers-by rushed them to a private hospital where Akshay succumbed to his injuries an hour later. Ameez is recovering and said to be out of danger, according to the HSR Layout police, who have registered a case of death due to negligence and rash and negligent driving against Akshay. They are awaiting the post-mortem report to ascertain whether the rider was intoxicated.

Knocked down
n another incident, a 32-year-old fashion designer was killed on the spot and the bike rider was injured when a hydraulic trailer driving against one-way knocked down the bike they were riding on Channasandra main road in the wee hours of Sunday.

The deceased has been identified as Vyshali Patel from Gujarat and the rider Hemaraj, who escaped with minor injuries. The duo was returning home from a friend's house when the accident occurred. The Whitefield traffic police have arrested the truck driver, Sunil.

BJP worker loses money to men who promised award

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Central Crime Branch (CCB) officials are on the lookout for two men who cheated a city-based social activist and BJP worker by promising an award from the Governor.

The accused, identifying themselves as Gyan Prakash and Giridhar Jha and claiming to be from Indian Journalist Compendium, met BJP worker K.R. Venkatesh and offered to get him an award from the Governor on the occasion of the 75th Independence Day. Venkatesh agreed to the offer for which the duo asked him to pay a donation of ₹1 lakh to their association. The accused even took Venkatesh to the Governor's house "to discuss the award". They issued him a certificate and escaped with the cash.

The cheating came to light when Venkatesh discussed his award with his friends. He filed a complaint with the Vidhana Soudha police on August 16 which was referred to the CCB.

Inspector suspended for misbehaving with woman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Gopalakrsihna Gowda , police inspector attached to K.P. Agrahara station, was suspended on Sunday for allegedly misbehaving with a woman staffer at a hotel in Indiranagar in an inebriated state.

Mr. Gowda abused the woman verbally and created a ruckus after she denied a room for him. The woman then called the J.B. Nagar station and filed a complaint. Following the complaint, the police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control and later filed a non-cognisable report. The victim complained that Mr. Gowda came to the hotel on Friday, got drunk and started demanding a room to rest. He asked the woman staffer how dare she was denying a room to a police inspector and allegedly hurled abuses at her. The other staff members tried to pacify him but he got infuriated and created a ruckus. The incident was reported to Police Commissioner C.H. Prathap Reddy, who suspended Mr. Gowda. The officer has a history of alcoholism and had even attended duty while he was drunk. He was issued warnings but in vain, a senior officer said.

READER'S MAIL

Lack of preparedness exposed
Sir, – The traffic disruption on the busy Bengaluru-Mysuru highway following flooding by rainwater has exposed the authorities' lack of preparedness.
Commuters were stuck for several hours on the stretch as several lakes breached their bunds and flooded the road.
With more rain forecast in the coming days, commuters are in for a difficult time. The authorities would do well to hasten the roadworks alongside the stretch and remove silt from storm-water drains on a war footing to ease traffic flow.

N.J. RAVI CHANDER
Bengaluru

Readers can write to letters.bangalore@thehindu.co.in

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Notice No. B/MD.HVS/RH/SBC/2022 Dated: 23-08-2022

Applications are invited for the post of Honorary Visiting Specialists (HVS) in the Divisional Railway Hospital, Bengaluru. Following field for a period of one year from the date of appointment.

Speciality	No of Post	No. of Hours/Days in a week	Honorarium per Month
General Surgeon	01	4 Hours a Day for 6 Days/Week	Rs. 78,000/-

Specialist interested to work as HVS at Divisional Railway Hospital, Bengaluru may send their applications with detailed curriculum vitae with copies of relevant documents in support of their Age, Qualification and Experience addressed to Chief Medical Superintendent, Divisional Railway Hospital, Bengaluru – 560 023 within 30 days from the date of publication of this notification. For any queries / clarifications kindly contact on 080-23150306 or e-mail : empanelledhospitalhsbc@gmail.com

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PUB/320/HAD/PRB/SWR/2022-23
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PUBLIC NOTICE

TAKE NOTICE THAT as represented by our Client, **M/s. Bhagyalakshmi Homes LLP ("Client")**, the below mentioned original document **("Original Sale Deed")** with respect to the property as mentioned below has been lost / misplaced and/or untraceable:

Property : Sy.No.72 : 2 Acres 18 Guntas, from and out of 4 Acres situated at Siddanayakanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore Rural District

Documents Detail : Original of Sale Deed dated 05/11/2014, Doc. No. DBP-1-07249/2014-15, Book – I, stored in CD. No. DBPD 336 registered on 10-11-2014 before the Sub-Registrar, Doddaballapur and executed by Smt. UmmeHajira, D/o A.AbdulRafeekh and Others in favour of M/s. Bhagyalakshmi Homes LLP.

Our Client has further represented that no charge / mortgage / third party right or any other encumbrances has been created over the aforesaid property whether by depositing the aforesaid Original Sale Deed or otherwise. Further, police complaint has also been lodged by our Client on 19.08.2022 before the jurisdictional High Grounds Police Station, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore in Serial No.297568, bearing Lost Report No.0297568/2022 stating that the Original Sale Deed has been lost / misplaced.

Any person/s in possession of the aforesaid Original Sale Deed may return the same to the undersigned, or anyone having any objection, claim, right, title, share and/or interest in respect of the said property or any part thereof, by way of sale, memorandum of understanding, exchange, mortgage, pledge, charge, gift, trust, inheritance, succession, possession, lease, tenancy, maintenance easement, license, bequeath, share, assignment, lien, attachment, development rights, right of way, lis-pendens, reservation, agreement, FSI consumption, development rights, or any liability or commitment or otherwise howsoever are hereby requested to make the same known in writing along with supporting documentary evidence in respect thereof, to the undersigned having their office as mentioned herein below, within a period of 14 (fourteen) days from the date of publication hereof failing which, the claim, if any of such person/s will be deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned for all intents and purposes and not binding on our client.

Advocate for the Client:
Subrata Mukherjee
Associate Partner
SNG & Partners
S-605, 6th Floor, South Block,
Manipal Centre, 47 Dickenson Road,
Bangalore 560 042.
Office: +91 80 4967 5151
Dated this 29th day of August, 2022

Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act).
RNI No. RAREMG/1978/46945 • ISSN 0971 - 751X

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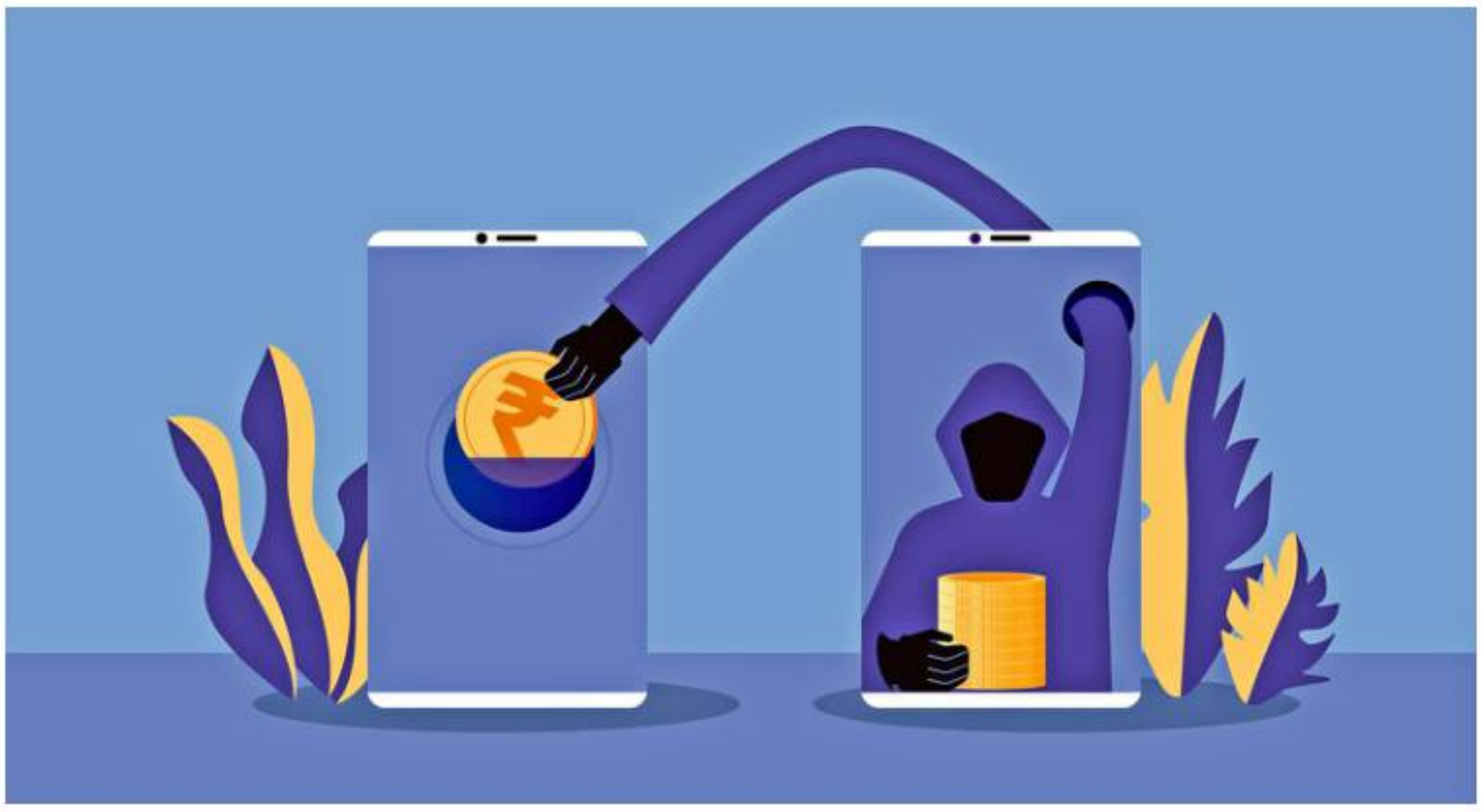

CACHE

The cyber threat to mobile banking

The lack of adequate cybersecurity and the dearth of talent in banking could potentially lead to a further rise in cyberattacks on user devices

JOHN XAVIER

THE GIST

- According to a 2020 Statista survey across 25 States in India, two-third respondents said they had a smartphone. Of these, half said they sent and received money digitally, and about 31% said they had a mobile app for banking. Nearly 14% said they used their mobile phones for banking-related purposes.
- Global cybersecurity firm Kaspersky warns of an increase in cyberattacks on Android and iOS devices in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region. One mobile banking trojan, called Anubis, has been targeting Android users since 2017. Roaming Mantis is another prolific malware targeting mobile banking users.
- There is push from regulators to make payment platforms interoperable at a time when the demand for technical experts is a serious concern in the banking industry.

As cash transactions become a thing of the past, an increasing number of people's interactions with their bank or bank accounts happen through their smartphones. According to a 2020 Statista survey of five thousand odd households across 25 States in India, two-third respondents said they had a smartphone. Of these, half said they sent and received money digitally, and about 31% said they had a mobile app for banking. Nearly 14% said they used their mobile phones for banking-related purposes. This number further jumped as the COVID-19 pandemic made a lot more people switch to digital modes of payment instead of transacting with cash. Convenience and quickness in completing payments via mobile applications also played a key role in accelerating this trend. This acceleration brings along with it a vulnerability: an increased threat of cyberattacks on mobile devices.

Kaspersky's view of the threat

Global cybersecurity firm Kaspersky warns of an increase in cyberattacks on Android and iOS devices in the Asia Pacific (APAC) as more people switch to mobile banking in the region. According to Kaspersky's senior malware researcher Suguru Ishimaru, mobile banking Trojans are dangerous malware that can steal money from mobile users' bank accounts by disguising the malicious application as a legitimate app to lure unsuspecting people into installing the malware. (A Trojan is a malicious code or software that looks legitimate but can take control of your device, including smartphones.)

At the APAC Cyber Security Weekend conference on Thursday, Mr. Ishimaru pointed out two prominent malware campaigns that operate in the region and target smartphone users in several countries.

Trojans let loose

One mobile banking trojan, called Anubis, has been targeting Android users since 2017, and its worldwide campaigns have hit users in Russia, Turkey, India, China, Colombia, France, Germany, the U.S., Denmark, and Vietnam. The malware has continued to be one of the most common mobile banking trojans with one in 10 unique Kaspersky users encountering a banking threat from the malware. The perpetrators infect the device through legitimate-looking and high-ranking malicious apps on Google Play, smishing (phishing messages sent through SMS), and BianLian malware, another mobile banking Trojan, Mr. Ishimaru noted.

Roaming Mantis is another prolific malware targeting mobile banking users. The group attacks Android devices and spreads the malicious code by hijacking domain name systems (DNS) through smishing exploits. Kaspersky's research team has been tracking the malware since 2018; and between the start of 2021 to the first half of 2022 alone, they detected nearly half a million attacks in the APAC region.

Global cybersecurity firm Kaspersky warns of an increase in cyberattacks on Android and iOS devices in the Asia Pacific (APAC) as more people switch to mobile banking in the region

Mr. Ishimaru said that while this threat group is known for targeting Android devices, their recent campaign has shown interest in iOS users. The group targets users by sending smishing texts with a short description and a URL landing page. If a user clicks on the link and opens the landing page, they are redirected to a phishing page. For iOS users, the landing page mimics Apple's official website; while Android devices download another malware. And once the individual inputs their login credentials and proceed to the two-factor authentication, the attacker gets to know the user's device and login details.

"There is a notion that iOS is a more secure operating system," Mr. Ishimaru said. "However, we [users] must take two things into account – the increasing sophistication of mobile bankers' social engineering techniques and malware arsenal and the possibility for human errors."

Interoperability compounds problems

Mobile payment platforms like Google Pay, PaytM, PhonePe, Square, PayPal, and Alipay have benefited from the shift in consumers' adoption of mobile banking.

As a result, they have also permanently changed the payments game to their advantage. But these platforms are operating in a closed-loop payment world where a Google Pay user can send money to another bank account via only the search giant's payment platform. This is similar to how Visa and Mastercard operate as they let payment transactions happen only within their own networks, not between each other.

This business model could change "driven partly by regulators that prefer open, standardised platforms that lower barriers to entry," according to an Accenture report on banking trends in 2022.

Some countries are already making payment platform providers change their business model. China, for instance, has ordered its internet companies to offer their rival firm's link and payment services on their platforms. In India, a new law demands all licensed mobile payment platforms to be capable of providing interoperability between wallets. The push from regulators to make payment platforms interoperable comes at a time when the demand for technical experts is a serious concern in the banking industry.

The shortage of technology, engineering, data and security experts needed by banks to realise their digital aspirations tends to hide a much wider problem: banks' appeal as first-choice employers of all kinds of talent has faded, Accenture's report adds. The lack of adequate cybersecurity and the dearth of talent in banking could potentially lead to a further rise in cyberattacks on user devices. And until this mismatch is fixed, it helps to be careful and extremely cautious when using a mobile device to make payments. Apart from the usual digital hygiene practices like keeping the phone up-to-date and rebooting regularly, consumers can ensure they use their phones for banking only when the device is connected to a secure VPN. iOS 16 users can turn on the Lockdown Mode as it limits the device's functionality and protects it from any potential malware.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Michael Jackson was born on August 29, 1958. Here's a quiz on the King of Pop

1 Identify the group founded in 1964 by Joe Jackson, known for their chart-topping songs 'I Want You Back', 'ABC', 'The Love You Save', and 'I'll Be There'.

2 Sycamore Valley Ranch is a developed property in Santa Barbara County, California, on the edge of Los Padres National Forest. By what name was it known before it was renamed in 2015?

3 Yamuna Sangarasivam, a Sri Lankan Odissi dancer, shot to fame in 1991 with the release of a Michael Jackson music video that celebrates multiculturalism. Name the song.

4 On March 25, 1983 during the television special 'Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever', Michael Jackson debuted something in front of a live audience at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. Which iconic entity did the audience witness that day?

5 In March 2019, a 1991 episode of The Simpsons guest-starring Jackson, 'Stark Raving Dad', was pulled from circulation. What were the claims that triggered its removal?

6 *An American Werewolf in London* is a 1981 horror comedy film directed by John Landis. Which 1983 music video of Michael Jackson did it inspire?

7 Name the 1979 song that earned Michael Jackson his first Grammy Award.

◄ This move is an illusionary street dance style that imitates a dancing machine or mannequin. Name this style, depicted on the left in Jackson's 1988 music video 'Smooth Criminal'. • WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

Compiled by: Ranjani Srinivasan

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions and Answers to the August 26 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The first president of the National Council of Women of New Zealand. **Ans: Kate Sheppard**
2. This politician was the only female member to be elected to the Kuwait parliament consecutively more than two times. **Ans: Safa Al Hashem**
3. In 1917, this organisation was founded in Madras to create a vehicle for women to influence government policy. **Ans: The Women's Indian Association founded by the Margaret Cousins**
4. The level of female participation in this country's politics is ranked as one of the world's lowest. **Ans: Samoa**
5. The last Swiss canton to give women the right to vote at the local level in 1990. **Ans: Appenzell Innerrhoden**
6. This memorial in Nelson Street, Manchester, was the home of an English political activist and her daughters, best remembered for organising the U.K. suffragette movement. **Ans: The Pankhurst Parlour**
Visual: The person depicted in this dollar coin and the milestone associated with its issue. **Ans: Susan B. Anthony; She is the first female citizen to be depicted on U.S. coinage**

Early Birds: Najish Farhan| Anjali Janardhanan

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

You need to chillax, my friend

You have been dropping off ever since you started reading the paper

S. UPENDRAN

"You're late again! What's your excuse this time?"

"I'm sorry. But Mohan's mother called just as I was leaving. She sounded terribly worried. Wanted me to talk to him."

"His big interview is today, isn't it? Did he look and sound nervous?"

"Very nervous. Isn't able to sit in one place. He's constantly pacing up and down. What's worse, he hasn't eaten anything since last night."

"That's not good. If he doesn't eat anything, his stomach may start making a strange noise during the interview."

"That's what I said. I told him to eat something, but he said he's too nervous to eat. He's afraid of throwing up."

"Mohan needs to chillax. Nothing is likely to..."

"Chillax? What does it mean?"

"It's a combination of two words. Chill and relax. Do you know what 'chill' means?"

"Of course, I do. In informal contexts, the word is mostly used to mean 'relax'. For example, *I chilled during the weekend*."

"Very good. When you 'chillax', you calm yourself down and relax. Sometimes, you do absolutely nothing. If you want to make a name for yourself, you need to work harder. Chillaxing is not going to get you anywhere."

"How about this example? *After completing the project, Sheela decided to take some time off and chillax in a hill station*."

"Sounds good. Now then, did you...."

"Did you chillax this weekend by watching the movie that I'd recommended?"

"I chillaxed all right, but I ..."

"What did you think of the movie? Wasn't it great? Especially, the climax?"

"Difficult to say. You see, half way through the film, I'd dropped off."

"Dropped off? You dropped someone off?"

"I didn't have to drop off anyone. I dropped off."

"When you 'drop someone off' somewhere, you take the person to that place in a vehicle and leave them. Isn't that what it means?"

"Yes, that's right! But what I'm..."

"For example, *my cousin insisted on dropping me off at the railway station*."

"That's a good example. But I didn't say that I dropped someone off. I said, I'd dropped off."

"You dropped off? Does it mean you fell out of your chair or something?"

"No, it doesn't. When you 'drop off', you fall asleep. You don't intend to, but you doze off. In this case, you don't lie down. You usually fall asleep while sitting."

"It happens to my father when he's watching TV. He drops off."

"It happens to a lot of people. Here's another example. *I dropped off several times during the course of the boring lecture*."

"*After having played in the hot sun all day, several children were seen dropping off at the dining table*."

"When you 'drop off', you sleep for a very short time."

"I see. And I suppose the expression is used mostly in informal contexts?"

"Yes, that's right! Another expression which has more or less the same meaning is 'nod off'."

"*Several students nodded off while watching the documentary*."

"Let's watch the rest of the movie tomorrow. You've been nodding off every now and then."

"I'll make a move. I want to see if Mohan has managed to chillax."

upendrankye@gmail.com

The 'Know Your English' column completes forty years!

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

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Reorient university education

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

How do we recalibrate the system of teaching-learning in our Higher Education Institutes?

A. PEER MOHAMED

Swift and significant changes in the talent market have marked global trends in the last two decades or so. Accordingly, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are expected to cope with the demands of various sectors. The predominant discourse on the demands of the talent market and the employability of graduates in India tends to revolve around one question: how do we recalibrate or improve the education system in our colleges and universities?

HEIs are required to constantly upgrade themselves to meet the demands of both students and industries against the backdrop of rapid technological development. The next generation of learners traverse physical and virtual spaces, so learning has to be active, agile, adaptive, innovative, cooperative and collaborative. At the same time, students need to be trained in social and communicative skills and entrepreneurship. Their creativity should be triggered to innovate, while keeping in mind environmental and social concerns. Above all, they need to be mentored to become socially productive citizens with honesty, integrity and humanity, which is possible if they are empowered to learn according to their abilities, interests, and specific needs through personalised learning.

Personalised learning

The term 'personalised learning' has been in vogue for a long time. Earlier, it referred to one-to-one tutoring system, mostly for the privileged. Today, it refers to learning that prioritises an individual student's requirements and uses flexible instructional practices in terms of content, pace and materials. Learning need not be linear as, sometimes earners may have to take a step back if not equipped with necessary schemata to understand the content. The entire learning process becomes student-centric and the students are encouraged to design their own learning pathways.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Analytics play a major role in online and hybrid learning platforms. Globally HEIs are introducing programmes where AI provides the platform to launch personalised learning. Technology provides a variety of materials in various formats to suit different students and monitor and assess their progress. However, it does not undermine the teacher's role. There are areas such as communication and collaborative skills, and emotional intelligence, which require human intervention. Therefore, the role of teachers in personalised learning remains as important as it is in traditional learning. AI can never replace educators; it can only enhance and support personalised learning by providing automated tasks, assessment platforms and feedback.

AI can never replace educators; it can only enhance and support personalised learning

Many paths of study emerge and all ultimately merge with the curriculum's common learning outcome. Thus, the pattern of education becomes student-centric. This systemic change gives a new dimension to teaching-learning process where teaching becomes counselling and teacher becomes a mentor.

The students are motivated to take control of their learning and become autonomous.

T-shaped learning

Another way to reorient university education is to incorporate T-shaped learning, which aligns with and complements multidisciplinary learning, emotional and cultural intelligence. This in turn boosts innovation, entrepreneurial ability, employability of an individual, and organisational success. The vertical line of 'T' represents expertise in subject specific knowledge and skills, while the horizontal stands for a wide range of communication, interpersonal and interdisciplinary skills, communication, and collaborative skills.

Thus, the re-oriented structure of HEIs will prepare the youth to be innovative and creative in their chosen fields, and train them to be flexible, and collaborative, in addition to be critical thinkers and good communicators.

The writer is Vice-Chancellor, B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai

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SC/ST Act may be invoked against Murugha Mutt seer

Statements of victims recorded before Child Welfare Committee, district police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BELAGAVI

A day after the Mysuru police registered a case under POCSO Act against Chitradurga-based Murugha Mutt seer Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru for alleged sexual abuse of minor girls, the Chitradurga police began investigation as the case was transferred to that town.

The town witnessed a series of protests seeking justice for both the seer and the victims amidst a possibility of the provisions of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act likely to be invoked against the seer as one of the victims belongs to a Scheduled Caste.

A file photo of the Murugha Mutt in Chitradurga.

The two girl victims, who made the charges, reached Chitradurga on Saturday night. They were placed in the district Bala Mandira and brought to the Child Welfare Committee. Their statements were recorded before the Child Welfare Committee and the district police from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. A medical examination of victims was conducted at the district hospital. Then they were taken to the Bala Mandira again.

The police said that a team of officers reached the mutt hostel for the spot mahajar on Sunday morning. In all likelihood, the five accused, including the seer, will be issued notices to depose before the police on Monday. "Based on evidences available, the investigation officers will take a call on arresting the accused," a police officer said.

"Meanwhile, investigating officers have found out that one of the victims belongs to the Dalit community. This fact came to light on Sunday. Provisions of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act are likely to be invoked against the seer," police officers said. However, till late on Sunday, the FIR against the seer had not been revised.

Kidnap complaint

The Chitradurga police have registered a complaint against S.K. Basavarajan, former MLA and administrator of the mutt, on the charge of kidnapping the complainant girls and of trying to sexually assault a woman warden of the mutt hostel.

The city witnessed two protests.

One group that included some seers and politicians, that said that allegations against the seer were false and baseless and that he should not be arrested. Another team held a protest before the Child Welfare Committee demanding a fair and transparent probe. Some of the protesters demanded a judicial probe into the issue, saying they had no faith in the local police. They shouted slogans supporting the victims, and said that they would stand by them. They urged them to tell the truth before investigators.

Meanwhile, the seer has responded to the allegations saying that they were part of a "big conspiracy" against him.

Some people shared an audio clip purportedly containing the voices of the seer and some of his confidants. In the clip, the seer reportedly says that he was ready for a conciliation or a trial. He suspected that some adversaries from inside the mutt had conspired against him.

"Some people tend to believe that roll call and blackmail are the methods to gain power. Such people are behind this," he said according to the audio clip.

"Time will decide everything. Even great personalities like Gandhi and Basavanna have faced serious challenges. Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross for saying good things and for trying to change society. I am happy that my supporters are with me in these trying times," he said.

Mutt sources said that they were preparing a legal response to the allegations. Applications for anticipatory bail are being prepared. A lawyer, who is related to both the seer and the administrator, is looking into the issue, a mutt officer said.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

'Bagina' politics

Ahead of the State Legislative Assembly elections, politicians do not let any opportunity to woo voters go unexplored. Ahead of Gowri and Ganesha Chaturthi festivals, Hassan MLA Preetham Gowda's (*in picture*) followers were

spotted offering 'bagina' to women. The kit included a sari and a set of bangles, among other things.
Women who received it said the kit carried a photo of the MLA, probably to convey to the women who the donor was.
Thousands of saris have been distributed in Hassan Assembly constituency.
Local workers of the ruling party and supporters of the MLA were actively involved in the distribution exercise.
JD(S) leader H.P. Swaroop held a press conference to criticise this "bagina politics." The sacred custom of offering "bagina" during the festival had been used for petty politics, he said. He did not forget to mention that the sarees distributed were of inferior quality.
Now, people of Hassan are wondering if the teaching community will get gifts on Teachers' Day (September 5). Last month, Mr. Gowda distributed cash prizes, besides mementos, to students who did well in the SSLC examination.

Different yardsticks

Congress leaders across the country have questioned the timing and decision of Ghulam Nabi Azad (*in picture*) to quit the party on Friday. While Rajya Sabha Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge accused Mr. Azad of "running away" at a crucial time when the party is fighting the ideology of the BJP, KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar said the veteran leader betrayed "mother Congress" and he was "zero without the Congress". Ex-Chief Minister Siddaramaiah too blasted Mr. Azad's decision

to quit the party.
However, the same State Congress leaders did not speak as vociferously when former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna quit the Congress and joined the BJP in 2017. Like Mr. Azad, Mr. Krishna too was in the Congress for a long period and enjoyed a range of positions – being MLA, Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister, Chief Minister, KPCC president, member of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Union Minister, and Governor of Maharashtra from 1971 to 2014.
Many are left wondering why Mr. Krishna did not receive the same amount of flak from the local Congress leaders as Mr. Azad is doing now.

Katti and two States

Why does Umesh Katti (*in picture*), Forest Minister, keep speaking of his dream of a divided Karnataka and his plans for becoming its Chief Minister or preparing his son for the coveted chair, at every available opportunity?
His critics say that it is simply because he does not want to speak about the two important Ministries he holds: Food and Civil Supplies and Forests and Ecology. The vital portfolios that he is in charge of, are ridden with challenges and filled with opportunities, at the same time. Yet, he rarely speaks about issues there.
Ten years ago, the State government announced that region specific foodgrains would be distributed to people in various districts, like ragi for south Karnataka, red rice for coastal Karnataka and jowar for northern Karnataka. Food and civil supply officers are supplying ragi by opting for local procurement, and are holding meetings with parboiled rice producing mills in three districts. But they are yet to hold preliminary meetings about jowar.

Challenges in Forest Department are no less. For example, after several decades, the department has opened up several hundred cases of forest encroachment and eviction. Around 2.5 lakh hectares of forests are pending final clearance.
Right now, there is all-round panic in his home town of Belagavi as a leopard has taken temporary shelter in the golf course and officers have been unable to catch it despite their efforts.
Mr. Katti, however, hardly talks about any of this but on "two States" most often. He sure knows how such talk will keep the newsrooms occupied and he would be spared questions about his efficiency in handling the departments.

SATHISH G.T.
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Investigation will reveal truth, says CM

Allegations against Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru are false: Yediyurappa

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Former Chief Minister and BJP's Parliamentary Board member B.S. Yediyurappa rallied behind Murugha Mutt seer Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru, who has been accused of sexually harassing minor girls, by terming the allegations as false, while Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai was cautious by saying that investigation will reveal the truth.

Mr. Yediyurappa, prominent leader of the Lingayat community, on Sunday claimed that a false case has been lodged against the seer. "It is a planned conspiracy and there is no truth in the allegations. Truth will come out after investigation," he said.

> **Those who know Murugha Mutt well cannot make such allegations against the seer. He is innocent.**
>
> B.S. YEDIYURAPPA
> Former Chief Minister

He said that the seer has won the hearts of people by contributing to religious, education, and health sectors. "Those who know Murugha Mutt well cannot make such allegations against the seer. I believe he is innocent and I am confident that he will come out of this," he said.

At the same time, Mr. Bommai refused to comment on the ongoing investigation against the seer and said the investigation will reveal the truth. He told reporters in Bengaluru that the police have been given full freedom and truth will come out after investigation. "This is an important case. A case under POCSO Act has been registered, and a case of kidnap has been filed in Chitradurga. The police are investigating both," the Chief Minister said. He said that it would be inappropriate to speak on the case when police are investigating.

Meanwhile, the Mysuru district committee of AIDSO has sought an impartial investigation into the allegations against the seer, said Chandrakala, secretary of AIDSO Mysuru district committee. The incident should be thoroughly investigated and stringent punishment should be meted to all guilty, she said while adding that the government should ensure that the law takes its own course without any influence from outside.

Regarding the Idgah Maidan issue in Chamarajpet, Mr. Bommai clarified that there is no confusion and the Revenue Minister has held meetings with officials over celebrating Ganeshotsava there. "Applications are being reviewed and a decision would be taken soon."

A peek into China

Sun Weidong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to India, and his wife Bao Jiqing, along with K. Srinivas Gowda, MLA and president of India-China Friendship Association (ICFA) Karnataka chapter, at the inauguration of the Chinese photographic exhibition showcasing the development of China, organised by ICFA Karnataka chapter at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath in Bengaluru on Sunday. •K. MURALI KUMAR

Bharat Jodo Yatra to enter State on September 29 or 30

125 Congress leaders from Karnataka will walk with Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir to be taken up by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will enter Karnataka near Gundlupet either on September 29 or 30 after being launched in Kanyakumari on September 7.

While 125 padayatris will accompany Mr. Gandhi for the 3,500-km walk that will traverse through 12 States and two centrally administered territories, 125 Congress leaders from Karnataka will walk with Mr. Gandhi when the yatra traverses through Karnataka for a distance of 511 km in 21 days. As many as 125 Congress leaders from the neighbouring States will also be allowed to walk with the yatris in Karnataka, Leader of the Opposition in Legislative Council and Bharath Jodo yatra coordinator in Karnataka B.K. Hariprasad told pressperson here on Sunday.

The details of the Bharath Jodo Yatra were shared here at a joint press conference addressed by KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar and Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Siddaramaiah besides Mr. Hariprasad.

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar with Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Siddaramaiah and other Congress leaders at a press conference in Bengaluru on Sunday. •K. MURALI KUMAR

As per the schedule, Mr. Gandhi is expected to walk from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. along with local villagers and later interact with local artists, lawyers, teachers, writers, students, women and youth. "He will resume the padayatra after the interaction that will cover issues of price rise, unemployment, corruption and farmers among other alleged failures of the government," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

The padayatra will enter the State from Chamarajanagar and will move towards Telangana via Mysuru, Mandya, Tumakuru, Chitradurga, Ballari, and Raichur. About 21 km will be covered daily and a public rally will be held at Ballari. The logo for the yatra was also released on Sunday.

Mr. Shivakumar said that though the Congress has organised the Bharat Jodo Yatra, anyone can participate by registering their names in this non-political yatra that aims to integrate the country. "The programme will have a tinge of Kannada elements. The yatra is being taken up to highlight five issues – harmonious society, women empowerment, unemployment issues, corruption-free governance, and good life for farmers and labourers," he said.

No talks yet on new State BJP chief: CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Curiosity has gripped the BJP State unit on whether its president would get an extension or will be replaced as incumbent Nalin Kumar Kateel completed his tenure of three years.

Normally, the BJP changes its presidents after they complete the three-year term. However, there is no clarity this time as less than eight months are left for the Assembly elections in Karnataka.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday said that there has been no discussion yet on the change of BJP State president, and that the issue had not come to his notice.

Mr. Bommai said that Mr. Kattel has so far toured the State eight to 10 times and organised the party from the booth level. "He has led the party in the gram panchayat polls, Legislative Council elections and byelections to Assembly. We are moving forward under his leadership."

Meanwhile, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa congratulated Mr. Kateel on completing three years as party's State president. "I pray to god to give him strength to immerse in social service and party building," he tweeted.

Mysugar will resume operations before September 10, says Munenakoppa

'Steps have been taken to ensure the factory does not go into the red again'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

With preparations made to bring sugarcane to Mysugar factory in Mandya from August 31, Sugar Minister Shankar Patil Munenakoppa said crushing operations at the government-run sugar factory in the State will resume before September 10.

Mr. Munenakoppa, who visited Mysugar factory on Sunday and inspected the functioning of various equipment and machinery on the premises, said necessary steps had been taken to ensure that the sugar factory does not go into the red again by adopting recommendations made by an expert committee.

He said the technical and financial recommendations made by the expert committee has identified the steps necessary to prevent wastage of money. The recommendations will be adopted to ensure that the sugar factory runs profitably without slipping into a loss again.

The government plans to begin production of ethanol also in the factory after starting process of crushing sugarcane first.

The government will ensure availability of necessary funds for capital expenditure so that operations can resume, he said and sought to assure the farmers of Mandya that Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai launch the operations of factory before September 10.

Minister for Sugar and Textiles Shankar Patil Munenakoppa inspecting the machinery at Mysugar factory in Mandya on Sunday. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mysugar factory was the pride of people of Karnataka and State government will ensure that the sugar factory functions properly. Knowledgable officials will be posted to run the factory under government control and there will be no room for any illegalities or violation of the law. Transparency will be ensured in the functioning of the factory, he said.

Mysugar factory's general manager Shivananda Murthy and Managing Director Patil Appasaheb were also present.

The factory, which was started by Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar in 1933, began experiencing difficulties in the 1980s before operations were suspended a few years ago. Mechanical and electrical problems, besides frequent breakdown in the machinery had been attributed for the factory's downslide.

Though there was a proposal to privatise the factory, the State government rejected the proposal due to opposition from farmers' representatives and decided to revive the operations of the sugar factory under its control.

T.N. Cabinet to discuss today report on Jayalalithaa's death

Arumughaswamy panel submitted its report on Saturday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Cabinet will meet on Monday to discuss the report of the Justice A. Arumughaswamy Commission of Inquiry into the circumstances that led to the death of former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on December 5, 2016, after a long period of hospitalisation.

Justice A. Arumughaswamy

Mr. Arumughaswamy, a retired judge of the Madras High Court, was appointed as the one-man commission in September 2017 by the AIADMK government, led by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami. He submitted his report to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin at the Secretariat on Saturday in the presence of Law Minister S. Regupathy and Chief Secretary V. Irai Anbu. In a release issued on Saturday, the government said Mr. Stalin had ordered that the report be placed before the Cabinet at its meeting scheduled for Monday for appropriate action. A notification issued by the Public Department on September 25, 2017, said the government felt it "necessary" to appoint a commission, headed by a retired judge of the Madras High Court, for an independent inquiry into the death of the former Chief Minister.

Two days later, the Department issued another notification, setting forth the terms of reference for the commission, according to which it was to "inquire into the circumstances and situation leading to the hospitalisation of the late Chief Minister on September 22, 2016, and subsequent treatment provided till her unfortunate demise on December 5, 2016".

Don't delay disbursement of compensation: Bommai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Asking officials not to delay disbursement of compensation for loss of crops and house damage due to heavy rains, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday directed them to conduct surveys of lakes for possible breaches and take up repair works immediately.

His direction to Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police of the rain-affected districts came during a meeting through video conference here.

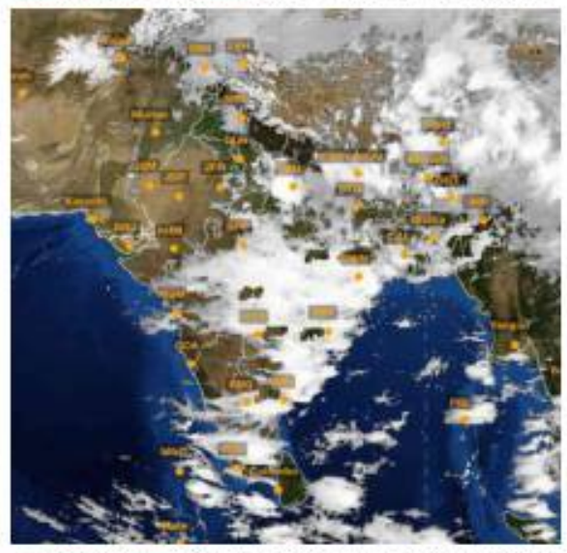
The district administration has been asked to prevent breach of lake bunds and take up necessary works to strengthen the embankments. The officials have been asked to be cautious in monitoring big lakes to prevent any loss of life. The SPs of Ramanagaram, Mandya, and Mysuru were asked to provide alternative roads to ensure smooth flow of traffic since water-logging has been reported in Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway.

Besides asking the officials to repair roads and bridges that have been damaged, he sought coordination among Public Works and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Departments in restoration of damaged roads.

The snapped power lines have been asked to be restored quickly.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY


TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 16.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rainfall at isolated places likely over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, East Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Telangana, Rayalaseema, Karnataka, Kerala, Mahe, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.1	34.9	25.6	Kozhikode	1.0	30.6	23.3
Ahmedabad	0.5	34.4	24.8	Kurnool	2.0	32.3	24.2
Aizawl	17.0	26.8	20.6	Lucknow	–	32.6	28.0
Allahabad	–	32.2	26.0	Madurai	–	35.1	23.7
Bengaluru	15.1	28.4	19.2	Mangaluru	70.4	29.4	22.0
Bhopal	–	29.7	23.2	Mumbai	–	31.4	25.5
Bhubaneswar	34.0	33.2	24.0	Mysuru	8.0	29.0	24.0
Chandigarh	–	35.0	27.9	New Delhi	–	35.0	25.6
Chennai	–	34.4	24.9	Patna	0.2	30.3	26.5
Coimbatore	–	32.0	21.8	Port Blair	1.0	30.2	24.4
Dehradun	–	30.8	26.0	Puducherry	0.8	32.2	23.6
Gangtok	1.2	22.0	18.2	Pune	–	30.5	19.9
Goa	–	30.2	24.7	Raipur	–	33.0	26.0
Guwahati	–	33.8	27.4	Ranchi	27.0	30.8	–
Hubballi	–	29.0	21.0	Shillong	9.0	25.0	17.2
Hyderabad	–	32.2	23.4	Shimla	–	25.8	19.2
Imphal	5.0	28.7	21.1	Srinagar	0.1	28.0	16.4
Jaipur	–	33.3	24.3	Thiruvananthapuram	–	30.8	23.7
Kochi	7.0	28.4	23.0	Tiruchi	–	35.9	25.0
Kohima	23.0	26.0	15.2	Vijayawada	0.1	32.4	26.6
Kolkata	54.0	33.1	26.5	Visakhapatnam	0.1	33.0	27.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO₂	NO₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	82	55	80	47	97	
Bengaluru	6	17	41	56	44	
Chennai	26	22	66	15	37	
Delhi	24	57	68	77	244	
Hyderabad	11	2	111	69	94	
Kolkata	12	3	8	34	47	
Lucknow	17	44	77	76	96	
Mumbai	20	7	84	28	126	
Pune	–	409	13	–	–	
Visakhapatnam	9	60	34	74	155	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Kharja, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 306 indicating a ver poor level of pollution. In contrast, Gangtok, Sikkim recorded a healthy AQI score of 21

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

M.V. Govindan is new State secretary of CPI(M) in Kerala

Kodiyeri going to Chennai for treatment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala State committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has named Excise Minister M.V. Govindan as the party's new State secretary.

M.V. Govindan

Mr. Govindan succeeds Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, who is reportedly going to Chennai for treatment. A CPI(M) communique said Mr. Balakrishnan was currently hard-pressed to discharge his duties as party secretary.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, Polit Bureau members Prakash Karat, M.A. Baby, A. Vijayaraghavan and Left Democratic Front (LDF) convener E.P. Jayarajan attended the meeting. Mr. Vijayan and Mr. Karat had called on Mr. Balakrishnan. He reportedly argued for a hands-on and full-time party secretary and was against any surrogate arrangement.

Mr. Vijayaraghavan had officiated for Mr. Balakrishnan when the latter went to the U.S. for treatment in 2021. Mr. Govindan's selection has thrown open the door for a possible Cabinet reshuffle. It triggered media speculation that the reconstituted Cabinet might be an eclectic mix of veterans and new faces. The CPI(M) might also fill the vacancy left by the exit of Saji Cherian.

Moreover, Mr. Govindan's election has precipitated an unusual situation where the Chief Minister and CPI(M) State secretary are legislators.

An identical situation unfolded in 1998 when Mr. Vijayan resigned as Power Minister in the E.K. Nayanar Cabinet to assume charge as CPI(M) State secretary following the demise of the then incumbent, Chadayan Govindan.

Mr. Govindan ascends to the helm of the CPI(M) in Kerala at a time when the party and ruling front is facing a slew of challenges. Foremostly, Mr. Govindan will have to steer the CPI(M) through its volatile disputes with Governor Arif Mohammed Khan. It will be imperative on him to maintain the apparent synergy between the party and government achieved by Mr. Balakrishnan and Mr. Vijayan.

Social justice: Karnataka CM takes indirect dig at Opposition

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Taking a dig at the Opposition indirectly, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday asked why social justice could not be ensured despite being in power for long. "Social justice is being spoken about for the last 25 years. Despite being in power, providing social justice is still being spoken about. How is it possible? Why social justice was not ensured in 25 years?" Mr. Bommai said at a convention of Bhovi community in Tumakuru, near here on Sunday.

He said: "Social justice is just not an object to be part of life, but of people who are struggling. You (community) have to be aware and should not allow social justice to be used only in speeches."

The CM urged the community members to ask those speaking of social justice to show programmes that will bring social justice.

He said: "Social engineering is needed to bring social justice. Education, employment and empowerment has to be given to increase income and quality of life. The community should seek social reengineering."

Telangana CM urged to lead campaign to unite farmers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

The meeting of Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao with leaders of farmers unions from 26 States on the second day on Sunday unanimously adopted a resolution urging him to lead a nationwide campaign to unite farmers for struggles right from the village level. Leaders at the meeting urged Mr. Rao to prepare the blueprint for the struggles taking into consideration the changed agricultural scenario in the country.

Mr. Chandrasekhar Rao lamented it was unfortunate that farmers did not find solutions to their problems even in the diamond jubilee year of independent India.

CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao appealed to farmer leaders to enter politics and get elected to statutory bodies to take up issues of agriculture.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

TENDER NOTICE No. 08 & 09-DY. CE-WS-PER-2022-23-OT. Date: 28.09.2022

For and on behalf of The President of India, The DY.CE/WS/PER, Southern Railway, Chennai - 600 023 invites e-tender for the following works as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Tenderers / Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** and only **online tenders will be accepted.** The cost of the tender form should be made through online payment gateway available in the website by the way of multiple banks' net-banking, debit card and credit card.

NAME OF THE WORK

08.CW/PER - CW/PER - Replacement of corroded steel staging with new steel staging along with foundation for high level tanks in paint shop, LBR shop and provision for new shed in south western side in LBR shop and provision for height gauge of wheel shop, CR shop, Oldwagon repair shop and TLD at CW/PER.

09. LW/PER:- Repairs to replacement of corroded high roof AC sheets with new metal roof sheets and damaged corroded gutters in M&PR, Wheel shop and AC shop at LW/PER.

Approximate cash value (₹)		Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Cost of tender form (₹)	Period of Completion in month(s)	Closing / Opening Date @ 14.30 hrs / 14.30 hrs.
Tender No.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
08	12920116.41	214600.00	5600	06	28.09.2022
09	7069111.33	141400.00	5600	06	28.09.2022

For further details, refer to website portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact Office of the Dy. Chief Engineer / Workshops / Perambur, Chennai - 600 023.

Deputy Chief Engineer / Workshops / Perambur / Chennai - 600 023

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KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No: SEE/TR(M)/RMGC/EE|O|/AE(T)/F-35/22-23/2297-303 Date:26.08.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through e-procurement mode only)

KPTCL invites bid against enquiry **No: SEE/TR(M)/RMGC/EE(O)/AE(T)/22-23/EPR-337/call-2 Dt.22.08.2022** for "Supplying of 7 Nos of 50 Kgs and 7 Nos of 25 kgs of Sulphur Hexa- Flouride (SF6) gas cylinders required at various substations coming under Transmission (Maintenance) Ramanagara Circle, KPTCL, Bengaluru". Tender Cost **Rs. 6,03,042/-.** The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the E-Procurement process can be obtained by logging onto KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on Hyperlink "e-procurement-KPTCL or e-proc website: **https://eproc.karnataka.govt.in**" on or after **16:00Hrs 29.08.2022.**

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele), Transmission(Maint.),
Ramanagara Circle,KPTCL 220/66/11Kv Vrushabhavathi Valley Station
1st Floor, Near R.R. Nagar Arch,Mysuru Road, Bengaluru-26, Tel.:080-29620155.

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.: SEE/WMC/TKR/2382-84 Date :24.08.2022

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through e-Procurement portal only)

KPTCL invites tenders for the following work.

Bid Enquiry No.: SEE/Tr(W&M)/TKR/DCA/EE(O)/AE/Enq-10

Date: 24.08.2022 Tender for Dismantling, Transportation (to and fro) and replacement of faulty 1x100MVA Power Transformer in 220/66kV Station Anchepalya by Good 1x100MVA Power Transformer released at 220/66/11KV KIADB Hardware Park Bengaluru.

The details can be obtained by logging into e-Procurement website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or KPTCL website: **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** and click on hyperlink "e-Procurement-kptcl" **on or after 01.09.2022.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (El.,)
Trans(W&M) Circle, KPTCL,
Siddaganga Complex, B.H. Road,
Tumakuru-572 102

Notice Inviting Expression of Interest

(RIL/E&P/EOI/2022/03)

(Under International Competitive Bidding)

for

Block No. KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6)

Reliance is India's largest private sector company, with a consolidated revenue of ₹ 792,756 crore ($104.6 billion), cash profit of ₹ 110,778 crore ($14.6 billion), and net profit of ₹ 67,845 crore ($9.0 billion) for the year ended March 31, 2022. Reliance's activities span hydrocarbon exploration and production, petroleum refining and marketing, petrochemicals, retail and digital services. Reliance is the top-ranked company from India to feature in Fortune's Global 500 list of "World's Largest Companies".

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), as Operator, on behalf of itself & its co-venturer BP Exploration (Alpha) Limited invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed and experienced Contractors/ Vendors for following categories, for Deep-water Block No. KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6):

Category Number	Category Description
OAM/KGD6/2022/1	Interior work of E&P Business Visibility and Operation Centre
OAM/KGD6/2022/2	Audio-Visual System Hardware & Software for E&P Business Visibility and Operation Centre

Interested Contractors/Vendors are requested to visit our website **www.ril.com** (eB2B> For Suppliers> E&P Notice for EOI) for further details on the above and submit their EOI through e-mail on **deveoiresponse.eandp@ril.com, on or before 12 September 2022**. For documents size beyond 10 MB, Contractors/Vendors should request RIL through e-mail to provide FTP link for uploading EOI documents. Subject of the mail should mention **"RIL/E&P/EOI/2022/03"** along with category number.

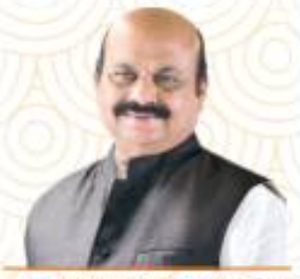
Address for Communication

Chief – Supply Chain Management,
Reliance Industries Limited, Petroleum Business (E&P),
Reliance Corporate Park (RCP),
Building No 11, 'A' Wing, Second Floor,
Thane-Belapur Road, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai - 400 701, India.
Email: deveoiresponse.eandp@ril.com
CIN: L17110MH1973PLC019786

Reliance Industries Limited
Growth is Life

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & SPORTS

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav


Sri Basavaraja S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister

NATIONAL SPORTS DAY

Launching of **RURAL SPORTS FESTIVAL & YOGATHAN 2022**

Presentation of Ekalavya, Lifetime Achievement, Karnataka Kreedarathna Award for the year 2020 and Kreeda Poshak Award and Cash Prize reward under Sahasra Kreeda Prathibha Yojane for 2021- 2022

EKALAVYA Award

Major Dhyan Chand NATIONAL SPORTS DAY

Date : 29.08.2022, 11.00 am
Venue : Banquet Hall, Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore

Presentation of Awards
Launching of Rural Sports Festival & Yogathan

Sri Basavaraja S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Karnataka

Special Invitees

Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman
Hon'ble Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Government of India

Sri M. Rajeev Chandrashekar
Hon'ble Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India

Release of Sadhana Sanchike

Dr. K.C. Narayanagowda
Hon'ble Minister of Sericulture, Youth Empowerment and Sports

Cash Award

Dr. K. Sudhakar
Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education

Presided by

Sri Rizwan Arshad
Hon'ble Member, Shivajinagar Assembly Constituency

Honorable Leaders of Opposition, Ministers, MPs , MLAs, MLCs, Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen of the Boards & all elected Members.

Dr. K.C Narayana Gowda, Hon'ble Minister of Youth Empowerment & Sports interacting with Sportspersons

All are Welcome

Dr. Shalini Rajaneesh IAS
Additional Chief Secretary
Dept., of Youth Empowerment and Sports and Planning

Dr. H.N. Gopalakrishna IAS
Commissioner
Dept., of Youth Empowerment and Sports

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SOUTHERN RAILWAY

(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)
DEPUTY CHIEF ENGINEER/I/
CONSTRUCTION/TRIVANDRUM,

TENDER NOTICE No. 08-DyCE-I-CN-TVC-2022-OT. Dated: 26.08.2022.

Name of work: Proposed Construction of Multi Disciplinary Divisional Training Institute at Kollam - Phase-I; Tender Value: ₹ 3,18,21,332.06/-; Period of Completion: **Twelve Months;** Tender Closing date: **22.09.2022 at 15.00 hrs;** Earnest Money Deposit : ₹ 3,09,100/-; Complete details and tender document will be available at https://www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Engineer / I / Construction / Trivandrum

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Sops for votes

Promising gifts in run-up to polls, not welfare, is the real 'freebie' issue

After considering the formation of an expert body to examine the issues relating to political parties promising free goods to voters in their election manifestoes, the Supreme Court has stayed its hand and referred the issue to a three-judge Bench. Also referred for deeper consideration is the correctness of an earlier judgment in *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu* (2013), which ruled that making promises in a manifesto would not amount to a corrupt practice. The proceedings before a Bench, headed by the now retired Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, last week, offered crucial perspectives on the political economy of welfarism, socialism and pre-election promises of 'freebies'. Over the few hearings, the Bench moved from vague references to 'freebies' to making rational distinctions between welfare schemes and socio-economic concessions on the one hand, and poll-time announcements of material goods and items as incentives to vote. This clarity itself was lacking in the initial stages, as omnibus references to 'freebies' and raillery against political parties for their approach to welfare dominated the discourse. Those who have approached the Court against irrational promises found support from the Union government. Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi making public comments disapproving of the 'freebie' culture, the Government's stand is no surprise.

However, the Government was reluctant to examine the issue through discussions among political parties and favoured a judicially appointed panel. But, such a panel may not achieve much. Most parties oppose any fetters on their right to appeal to voters through means of their choice and, if elected, use their mandate to distribute finances and resources as they deem fit, subject to law and legislative approval. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Bench has included in its reference, questions on the scope of judicial intervention in the matter and whether any enforceable order can be passed. The two-judge Bench judgment in 2013 had examined the issue in the backdrop of the DMK coming to power in 2006 on a promise to distribute television sets to the poor and implementing it. It ruled that the Directive Principles of State Policy allow such schemes and that spending of public funds on them could not be questioned if it was based on appropriations passed by the legislature. It also concluded that poll promises by a party could not be termed a 'corrupt practice'. That Bench had also rejected the argument that giving benefits to everyone, that is, the poor and the well-off, would violate the equality norm in Article 14. When it came to state largesse, it said, the rule against treating unequals as equals would not be applicable. Does this amount to implying that the Directive Principles can override fundamental rights, as the petitioners have argued? This too awaits examination.

Clean and clear

Government, Twitter must reassure the public that user data has not been compromised

A whistle-blower's disclosure that the Indian Government forced Twitter to hire its agent, who then got access to the platform's user data, should alarm anyone even remotely interested in the health of democracy in the country. At the very least, it requires an official response from the Government as also from Twitter, arguably the most influential social media network of these times. Instead, there now is silence. But perhaps this is hardly surprising, given how such matters have played themselves out in recent years. The disclosure was made to U.S. government agencies and congressional committees last month but came to light when CNN and *The Washington Post* reported about it last week. The whistle-blower is Peiter 'Mudge' Zatko, a cybersecurity expert brought in to help a Jack Dorsey-run Twitter in November 2020 to confront challenges related to security and privacy. He was fired by Mr. Dorsey's successor Parag Agrawal early this year. In his short stint there, he found that Twitter had a long way to go to address security vulnerabilities – the disclosure says, "he uncovered extreme, egregious deficiencies by Twitter". But, according to Mr. Zatko's disclosure, Twitter conveyed a very different message to the outside world, and thus ended up deceiving everyone from users to investors, and from the Federal Trade Commission to Elon Musk (who not long ago seemed to want to buy the social media network).

The Indian angle may be a side-story in all this but, worryingly for the world's largest democracy, comes under the ambit of what Mr. Zatko considers "multiple episodes suggesting that Twitter had been penetrated by foreign intelligence agencies and/or was complicit in threats to democratic governance". To be fair, there are unanswered questions about this part of his disclosure, whose most important line is the following: "The Indian government forced Twitter to hire specific individual(s) who were government agents, who (because of Twitter's basic architectural flaws) would have access to vast amounts of Twitter sensitive data". It is not clear, for instance, whether the agent he is referring to is the grievance officer that social media networks operating in India are required to recruit, as per the new laws framed last year. Also, it may seem that the access to sensitive data that this agent has is a product of Twitter's own flaws and not anything else. That is why a clarification is important. In recent years, the Government has come across as being too eager to block its critics on social platforms. That, on top of unfettered access to sensitive user data, as is being alleged in the disclosure, can kill free speech. It is now time for the Government to assure everyone that it is indeed batting for the individual's rights of free speech and privacy.

A public judge with an uncertain legacy

The tenure of the 48th Chief Justice of India did not live up to the promise and the hope it held out at the beginning

ANUP SURENDRANATH

Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana was the 48th Chief Justice of India (CJI) and only the second judge from Andhra Pradesh to occupy this position after Justice K. Subba Rao in 1966-67. He was appointed to the High Court of Andhra Pradesh in June 2000 while the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance was in power and came to the Supreme Court in February 2014, being among the last judges to be appointed by the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance Government. His tenure as CJI for one year, 124 days began with widespread hope that an extremely strong executive would be held accountable and that the most pressing constitutional issues of our times would be heard and adjudicated upon. However, as is evident now, that did not play out and it ended up being a tenure that promised so much and delivered very little on those fronts.

Institutional malaise

One of the most striking faultlines of Justice Ramana's leadership came from his own farewell comments. For an outgoing CJI to acknowledge and apologise for the breakdown of the listing and posting of cases speaks to a far deeper institutional malaise. It is curious that he apologised for not paying much attention to the listing process and it is just as curious that Justice U.U. Lalit, the incoming CJI, immediately identified reforming the listing process as an urgent area of concern. The stark contrast in prioritising the listing process for course correction presents a very odd picture for those of us who watch the Court from outside. While this might seem insignificant to laypersons, it is exactly these listing and allocation processes that decide what gets decided in the Supreme Court and who decides it.

To effectively understand Justice Ramana's legacy, it is important to understand the prevailing situation in the Supreme Court when he took over as the CJI. After the various controversies that plagued the tenures of Justices Dipak Misra, Ranjan Gogoi and S.A. Bobde as CJIs, the Supreme Court was considerably weakened as an institution. The lead up to his CJI tenure in the early parts of 2021 and first few months as CJI were seen as hopeful indicators of a resurgence. Orders on bail under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), fixing gaps in dowry death law, medical assistance to Siddique Kappan and powerful speeches on criticism, dissent in a democracy, and the need to guard against tyranny were sources of hope.

Largely disappointing

However, Justice Ramana's judicial contribution as CJI was disappointing. His orders keeping the sedition law in abeyance and preventing its further use until its constitutional validity was determined will perhaps be his most lasting judicial legacy as CJI. His judgment striking down provisions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act for arbitrary and overbroad criminalisation is also significant but it is obvious that Justice Ramana avoided constitutional questions that were political minefields. Cases on electoral bonds, the constitutional validity of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, dilution of Article 370, hijab ban in schools, reservations for Economically Weaker Sections, and Aadhaar amendments raised important constitutional questions that needed urgent resolution but were not listed.

The hearings on Pegasus revealed the extent of the difficulty currently faced by the Court in getting answers from the executive. The manner in which only very limited parts of the Pegasus committee's report were revealed continues the troubling trend of secrecy and opaqueness in fact finding in such matters. Complicating this approach was the rather inexplicable prioritisation of the 'freebies' case in the last few days of his tenure. In an issue where the Court's jurisdiction and competence are rather doubtful, spending crucial judicial time on it sent rather odd signals.

PTI

In many ways, his judicial legacy as a judge of the Supreme Court seems to carry more weight than his legacy as the CJI. Justice Ramana's orders on Internet restrictions in Kashmir, bringing the office of the CJI under the Right to Information (RTI) Act and his track record on the death penalty all indicated potential for deep constitutional thinking that was not delivered upon ultimately. In particular, his judgment in Accused X pushed the law forward on the manner in which issues of mental illness must be considered during sentencing.

Bright spots in administration

It is perhaps on the administrative side that Justice Ramana leaves his most lasting legacy. Before he took over as CJI, there was a 22-month deadlock on collegium recommendations. As CJI he ensured 11 appointments to the Supreme Court (nine in one go) and over 200 appointments to various High Courts. As part of this, Justice Ramana has also ended up ensuring that India will have its first female CJI in Justice B.V. Nagarathna between September-October 2027. However, on appointment of judges during his tenure, two issues raised significant concerns. The failure to elevate Justice Akil Kureshi to the Supreme Court despite his seniority, performance, and reputation and the decision to transfer Justice Sanjib Banerjee from being the Chief Justice of Madras High Court (with a strength of 75 judges) to the Meghalaya High Court (with four judges) needed answers that never came. Another issue that has received far less attention has been Government's resistance to appoint Nagendra Ramachandra Naik, Aditya Sondhi (who has since withdrawn himself from consideration) as judges of the Karnataka High Court and Saurabh Kirpal as a Delhi High Court judge. These issues with elevations, transfers, and appointments show the complicated relationship between the Court and the Government. In that light, ensuring over 200 appointments is no easy task and it demonstrates an ability to navigate tricky waters with the Government.

Some faultlines

Justice Ramana himself was appointed as a judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in June 2000 when he was the Additional Advocate General to the Chandrababu Naidu (Telugu Desam Party)-led Andhra Pradesh government. Ram Jethmalani was the Union Law Minister under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government at that time and more than a decade later, in February 2013, interesting facts about Justice Ramana's appointment emerged. The Supreme Court was hearing a petition, argued by Ram Jethmalani, that Justice Ramana could not continue as a High Court judge. The Supreme Court Bench comprising Justices Aftab Alam and Ranjana Desai pointed out to Ram Jethamalani that it was under his leadership that the Law Ministry had pushed for Justice Ramana's appointment despite it being twice rejected by the Supreme Court collegium (as documented by V. Venkatesan).

Another controversy that marred Justice Ramana's tenure in the Supreme Court has been the complaint and investigation into the purchase of land at very low prices by his daughters in the Amaravati capital region of divided Andhra Pradesh. The gag orders on the media to prevent reporting on the case by the Andhra Pradesh High Court in September 2020 (through the then Chief Justice J.K. Maheshwari) were wholly inappropriate. Though the Supreme Court stayed the High Court's gag orders, the situation worsened with the complaints by Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, against Justice Ramana. This forced the Supreme Court to initiate an in-house inquiry that eventually dismissed the complaints. Through a terse statement released by the Court, the complaints were dismissed and declared that the inquiry report would remain confidential. The fact that Justice Ramana was hearing a matter that sought to hasten hearings in corruption cases involving Members of Parliament/Members of Legislative Assemblies and the potential consequence for corruption cases against Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy only served to make this entire episode murkier.

Justice Ramana has perhaps been the most visible CJI in the history of the Supreme Court. One of the most striking images from his tenure has to be the image of him, in December 2021, riding in a decorated bullock cart with a large number of people around him on a visit to his village in Krishna district after taking over as the CJI. The unprecedented intensity and extent of the reportage involving Justice Ramana's public engagements, including Op-Ed page contributions in national newspapers, speaks to an effort to redefine the relationship between the CJI, the Supreme Court and the people of this country. However, by virtue of this extended exposure, it did seem that the transformative constitutional vision of the CJI was more evident outside court rather than inside it. Perhaps the most enduring question of Justice Ramana's legacy will be why he could not bring a transformative constitutional vision into the Chief Justice's court.

Anup Surendranath is a Professor of Law at National Law University, Delhi.
Research assistance by Ayan Gupta

Japan's continuing struggle with gender parity

Investing in women's education and health may have limited impact if it is a society trapped in gender norms

PRAJAKTA KHARE &
PRACHI GUPTA

According to recent data, Japan recorded the lowest total births in 2021 at just about 8,10,000. Japan also ranked lowest among the developed countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2022. The two statistics are connected by one factor – gender norms. Usually, we associate low gender equality with poor developing countries. However, gender inequality emanates from many sources, lack of resources being one, gender norms being the other. As a country transitions from developing to developed, the former may be taken care of, the latter is not guaranteed. With a target of transforming India into a developed country by 2047, there are some lessons we should learn from our eastern friend, Japan, the world's fourth largest economy.

Developed, yet a low rank

Japan ranked abysmally low (at 116 out of 146 countries) in the Gender Gap Index 2022. This makes Japan the worst performer amongst the G7 group, where most of the countries ranked between 10 and 27, barring Italy at 63.

What explains this low rank for a highly developed country? Japan has a perfect score on gender equality in educational attainment. In fact, 15-year-old Japanese girls (and boys) score higher than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average in scientific and mathematical literacy and reading performance. Health and survival of women including healthy life expectancy also stands near a perfect score of 0.97. Japan's overall low rank in the Gender Gap Index stems from the low presence of women in leadership roles and politics. It ranks below 130 when it comes to women in Parliament and women as senior officials and managers. Women hold a mere 10% of Japan's parliamentary seats (as of April 2022) as compared to around 30% or more in the G7 countries. Japan has not had a female head of the state in the past 50 years.

Widespread mindset

Controversies around sexism in Parliament, company boardrooms and at leading institutions, are common. For instance, in 2021, the head of the Tokyo Olympics Committee, also a former Prime Minister, received global backlash and was forced to resign for his sexist remarks about why women should not participate in board meetings as they talk too much. In political speeches, women have been referred to as birth-giving machines (told to bear at least three children). Although such statements were later retracted with apologies after public backlash, they reflect the social mindset towards women in general. A few years ago, medical schools in Japan were reported to have rigged the entrance examination scores of female candidates, penalising them for their gender to ensure that 70% of the students enrolled were males. Why? Ostensibly because women tend to leave the medical profession later in life due to marriage and childbearing responsibilities.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Evidence from Japan suggests that high per capita income does not guarantee gender equality as the latter is usually rooted in social and cultural norms. Japanese society is founded on, and still conforms to, very strong gender norms of what men and women should do. It is still common to refer to one's wife as *kanai*, translated as the one inside the house. An office worker in Japan is often referred to as salaryman – again, a gendered term. The image of a typical salaryman is that of a family-wage earning man who works overtime including weekends. Staying at work till the boss does and then joining late evening *nomikai* or conversation over drinks are the expected norms in Japanese work-life. This makes it impossible for married women, usually the primary caregivers, to have strong careers. Most women, therefore, engage in part-time and low-paying jobs such as secretaries and assistants. Mothers returning to the labour market receive a 'mommy track' career path which involves little or no progression. Women are perceived unsuitable to be leaders which reflects in their low numbers as company heads (8%). Japan has less than 5% women in middle management and senior management in the central government. Japanese women earn about 57% that of men, making this wage gap one of the worst among OECD countries.

The socio-economic impact

What are the consequences of such gaps? This inequality explains the sharp decline in marriage rates and fertility in Japan which is amongst the worst in rich countries. Marriage rates in Japan have fallen by 50% since 1970 and fertility has fallen to 1.3 children per woman (2021). The high opportunity cost of caregiving and motherhood has made Japanese women perceive marriage and childbearing as a burden. This has created double trouble for the long-stagnant Japanese economy. Low marriage rates have led to a fall in consumption and investment as singles consume and invest less than households. For example, singles tend to rely more on rental housing rather than owning a house. Low birth rate implies a steady decline in the future workforce and a rising pension burden of an aging population on the fiscal account. The big wage gap in male-female income suppresses domestic demand as half of its population relies on low wages and temporary jobs.

'Womenomics' and reality

In an effort to revive the stagnant Japanese economy, former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe laid emphasis on 'womenomics' as one of his key policy measures. It aimed at boosting female labour participation, and increasing the percentage of women in leadership positions to 30% by 2020. This goal however was not achieved and even Abe's own cabinet struggled to meet the target. The deadline was revised to 2030.

Will this goal be achieved? Last month, Japan's land ministry hired an all male lecturer staff to deliver a course on community development to public servants and added 15 women only after strong public backlash.

Japan's struggle with gender parity teaches us that investing in women's education and health may have limited impact if that society is trapped in gender norms that restrict women from capitalising these investments for themselves, the society and the country. Policymakers must take cognisance of such evidence as this can trap us into other economic problems as we chalk out the path for a developed India by 2047.

Prajakta Khare is an Associate Professor of Economics at Meiji Gakuin University, Japan. Prachi Gupta is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Temple University, Japan. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Congress and Azad exit

The exit of veteran leader Ghulam Nabi Azad from the Congress is a wake-up call for the Grand Old Congress Party. The caustic observations made by Mr. Azad, especially about Rahul Gandhi, are absolutely right. In fact many Opposition parties are reluctant to join hands with the Congress because of the weak leadership of Mr. Gandhi. Since the 2024 general election is a do-or-die battle for the Congress, the Gandhis should hand over the party leadership to a suitable non-Gandhi leader. Ashok Gehlot may be an acceptable replacement and he should be given a free hand to run the show.

G. JAYARAMAN,
Bengaluru

■ The way Mr. Azad chose to part ways with the Congress, ending his decades long association, leaves a bitter taste, especially the manner in which he has aired his views in public. As a seasoned parliamentarian, he should have left the party graciously. In fact, he has done nothing new in vilifying Mr. Gandhi. Mr Azad's former party was what nurtured him politically and made him a person of some standing. His act is a case of sheer betrayal.

A.V. NARAYANAN,
Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

The 49th CJI

The new Chief Justice of India may have a short tenure of just 74 days, but one hopes that he will act as per his conscience by following the rules of law and tenets of the Constitution. We look forward to quick action and impartial verdicts.

THARCIUS S. FERNANDO,
Chennai

Judges and perks

It is baffling that at a time when the issue of 'freebies' has engaged the judiciary and the executive, the Central government has come out with a slew of 'personal freebies' for Supreme Court judges. The government of the day must refrain from any action that may be perceived as an attempt to influence the higher judiciary's independence. However, one may still be tempted to ask this question: why does the Government not extend such benefits with suitable modifications to the judges of High Courts too?

S.K. CHOUDHURY,
Bengaluru

Coaching capital

The projection of Kota's coaching centres as 'temples of learning' is more of an exaggeration (Page 1, August 28). There are top-class coaching institutes spread across the country which provide better training to students without the stress and the exam-oriented methodology adopted by institutes such as Kota.

DR. BIJU C. MATHEW,
Thiruvananthapuram

MDG-BGE

NDTV: the hostile takeover

Large conglomerates owning media units might crimp editorial independence

KHUSHBOO NARAYAN

• RAJEEV BHATT

The Adani Group's potential hostile takeover bid of NDTV brings home the dangers of over-borrowing, the growing clout of large corporates in the media business and the need for media companies to focus on subscription revenues.

While the Adani Group's move seems to have blindsided the management of NDTV, it should not have come as a total surprise either. Convertible warrants issued by a promoter company of NDTV have been hanging over it as a Damocles sword for at least a decade now.

The genesis

In 2009, RRPR Holdings, owned by the founders of NDTV, Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy, issued convertible warrants to a firm called Vishwapradhan Commercial Pvt. Ltd. (VCPL) against a loan taken from the latter. Upon conversion, these warrants are convertible to equity shares equal to 99.99% of RRPR, which had a 29% stake in NDTV. The warrants could be exercised at any point in time during the loan tenure, or thereafter, the agreement between RRPR and VCPL said.

The Roys seem to have agreed to issue such a warrant since they had to refinance loans taken from the ICICI Bank which was charging an annual interest of 19%. The loan itself was first owed to Indiabulls Finance, which helped fund an open offer by NDTV in 2007.

While VCPL, a Reliance group-backed entity, had entered as a sort of white knight to help RRPR and extended an interest free loan, there is no such thing as a free lunch.

Hence, the agreements between RRPR and VCPL included convertible warrants, call options on NDTV shares issued to VCPL's associates and protective rights such as the right to appoint a director to RRPR, getting prior written approval from VCPL for RRPR and NDTV to raise funds, buyback shares, set up a subsidiary, sell or pledge RRPR's shares in NDTV and so on.

Now, VCPL has passed through the hands of Reliance and its associates and has been bought by AMG Media Networks Limited, an Adani Group company, which wasted no time in exercising the option to convert the warrants into shares in RRPR. This also triggered an open offer under the Takeover Code.

What happens next?

AMG had given RRPR almost 48 hours to convert the warrants and transfer the shares. That deadline ended on Thursday. NDTV said that since Radhika Roy and Prannoy Roy are not permitted by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to conduct any securities transactions till the end of November this year, this prohibition also applies to all the firms that these two promoters possess. It said that SEBI approval is needed.

Proxy advisor and founder of InGovern Shriram Subramanian said that this defence used by the Roys is thin because the loan agreement predates the SEBI ban. It is a tactic to buy time till November. Be that as it may, what's curious is that Adani's open offer under SEBI rules to buy a further 26% in NDTV at ₹294 a share is far below the current market price of ₹424 a share.

To be sure, NDTV's market price has jumped by around 186% in the last six months on speculations of sale and the fair value might be much lower.

However, if Adani Group is intent on gaining control, why is its open offer price at such a steep discount to the market price? One conclusion is that perhaps it doesn't want to gain control. But then, what will it achieve with a 29% stake in NDTV?

Tycoons typically buy media companies because it gets them influence or it is some sort of philanthropic effort. If it were the second, an easier way would be to just inject funds into a media company through say, preference shares or such instruments and give it the resources to pursue independent journalism. A messy takeover battle is not how one does philanthropy.

With a 29% stake, however, Adani Group – or any investor for that matter – can be a thorn in the side of a company's management. That's because they can block a certain category of shareholder resolutions called special resolutions. These resolutions need 75% of shareholder votes to pass.

Buyback of shares, loans and investments by a company and appointment of certain directors, etc, requires a special resolution. A shareholder with 29% stake can block this and be an irritant even if they don't have a say in the day-to-day affairs of the company.

Now that the Roys appeared to have dug in their heels, Adani could well take the matter to court. In a statement on Friday, Adani conveyed that it didn't buy into NDTV's argument and expressed surprise at the latter's stand.

On its part, NDTV will also invoke another clause in the loan agreement which bars VCPL and its associates from purchasing shares of the television company, which will increase their holding to more than 26% in NDTV without the consent of the promoters.

According to company law expert Jayant Thakur, this clause can be tricky to apply. It bars VCPL or the affiliates from directly purchasing shares of NDTV as it would increase their holding to more than 26%. But, he says, the question is whether this would bar conversion of warrants in RRPR whereby VCPL effectively becomes the 99.99% owner of capital and thereby control more than 26% of NDTV.

VCPL may say that it is just converting holding in RRPR and hence, not purchasing shares of NDTV.

This will be a key point of the litigation.

Effect on Indian media

The Adani Group's entry into the media business (it already has a 49% stake in BQ Prime) is yet another example of the growing dominance of corporations in this sector. Companies, often like governments, want to control the narrative. And that narrative will not necessarily serve the interest of the public at large.

Moreover, when large and diverse conglomerates own media units, there is a significant conflict of interest which could crimp editorial independence. Some of these other large businesses are in regulated sectors such as energy or telecom, where the government has a say, and corporations would displease the government, whether at the Centre or the States. This can happen even if the corporate owner tries to maintain an arm's length relationship with their media entity.

Media companies can maintain editorial integrity by cutting down their dependence on sources of revenues which have an embedded element of conflict of interest.

Media consumers (readers and viewers) should be at the forefront and subscription revenues the way forward.

Khushboo Narayan is Dean of the ACJ-Bloomberg Programme at Asian College of Journalism, Chennai.

PIN code @50 years

The system of postal code may not be operationally relevant in the new role of post offices

GAUTAM BHATTACHARYA

India Post introduced a six-digit Postal Index Number (PIN) code on August 15, 1972, the day the silver jubilee of India's independence was observed. The idea was to give a unique identity to all physical addresses of the country in terms of the delivery jurisdiction of the post offices. This code was expected to help in bypassing the challenge of inaccurate addressing and ensure accurate and fast delivery by post offices. Now it is time to introspect whether the system succeeded in achieving its purpose in the last 50 years.

The postal code, known differently in different countries viz. postcode, zip code, etc, is an alpha-numeric or numeric number that is included in the postal address for easy identification of the sorting-district and the addressee's delivery post office. The codes were introduced nationwide in Germany in the year 1944, Singapore (1950), Argentina (1958), the U.S. (1963), Switzerland (1964), India (1972), and the U.K. (1974). Introduction of sorting machines in the West in the 1960s also necessitated the introduction of codes since the machines could not read the addressee's post office easily if described in writing. The Universal Postal Union says that 160 countries of the world have so far introduced postal codes.

Speeding up the sorting

The post code revolutionised the system of manual postal sorting as the sorters are not required to keep in memory the locations of thousands of post offices. To what extent did the PIN code succeeded in speeding up the sorting in India? It is intriguing that even after five decades, a substantial volume of mail in India is not PIN coded. The Government took efforts to educate the citizens to write the PIN code of the addressee on the mail. It succeeded to a small extent. Until about a decade ago, government offices and the billers of the utility services were the biggest culprits. In cities such as Delhi and Kolkata, where sorting work is done by machines, mails without PIN code must be coded separately before they are put to sorting machine, causing delay in processing at the sorting centres.

Of late, the proportion of PIN-coded mails in India started improving after the introduction of computerised billing by utility service providers and the launching of KYC norms by banks, where providing complete and accurate addresses is mandatory. Now, new challenges have come up. Personal mail has almost vanished after the revolution of mobile telephony in the last two decades. What remains with the postal system are documents and e-commerce parcels where there is stiff competition from the couriers. Is the present structure of PIN code capable of handling that challenge?

The PIN code helps in taking a piece of mail to the addressee's post office. The delivery jurisdiction of the post office is normally divided into beats and there is a postman assigned to each beat. Beat sorting at the post office is done manually in India.

Can we think of integrating the beat code with the six-digit PIN code? The PIN code in that case will not only identify the addressee's post office but also the concerned beat. If the post office makes the mobile number of the delivery person of the beat available, citizens may even leave instructions to him regarding his convenience to take delivery.

Machines to the rescue

Nowadays, the letter sorting machines, flat sorting machines (handling packets) and parcel sorting machines have tremendous capacity for sorting in a day. With the dwindling volume of personal mail, it is not impossible to sort all incoming mail and shipments at one circle or regional hub, making the concept of sorting-district redundant. Even the beat-sorting, which is done at the level of the post office, can be done in the circle hub, if the beat code is integrated with the PIN code.

The logistic system associated in processing of e-commerce articles is intrinsically different from that of handling personal mails. A postman used to go to his beat in a bicycle along with a hundred mail pieces for delivery. But he needs a vehicle for delivery of fewer number of e-commerce parcels. For that, we need to centralise the parcel delivery centres and mechanise the beats. This in the long run may even call for rationalisation of PIN codes.

The system of postal code that was introduced 50 years back may not be operationally relevant in the new role of a post office. Is India Post ready to take that challenge? Though the code was originally designed to help postal operations, today it is used by couriers, e-commerce players and various other service providers as a means of locational identification of a person. This aspect also needs to be kept in mind before rationalising the PIN code.

Gautam Bhattacharya is an independent commentator on socio-economic issues and a former civil servant.

STATE OF PLAY

Furore over Lok Ayukta

The Opposition says the government wants to replace the Governor as the competent authority

G. ANAND

The Kerala Lok Ayukta (Amendment) Bill, 2022, has raised the political temperature in the State.

It has brought up a swirl of issues to the fore of the public debate, including the Opposition's allegation that the proposed law aspired to accord the executive appellate authority over damning decisions by the anti-corruption ombudsman.

The Bill might open a new legal and political battleground between the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) opposition. Much about the proposed law remains in the realm of conjecture, though the UDF has opposed the legislation vehemently.

The official Bill is likely to provide more clarity on the matter. The Bill will assume final form only after vetting by the Subject Committee.

The Opposition says it has reasons to believe that the Bill aspires to replace the Governor as the competent authority to accept or reject any unfavourable decision by the Lok Ayukta (under Section 14(5) of the Kerala Lok Ayukta Act, 1999) against the Chief Minister of the State.

In the case of Ministers found guilty of corruption or nepotism by the Lok Ayukta, the proposed law allegedly bestows appellate powers on the Chief Minister (the competent authority).

The UDF has damned the Bill as a violation of the cardinal principle of natural justice, saying "no one should be a judge in their own cause." It argues that the Bill violates the fundamental right to equality before the law.

The Bill accords the executive appellate jurisdiction over the judiciary. The amendment aspires to vest unqualified judicial power in the executive.

Slamming the bill, the Opposition said it had shamed the Kerala Assembly, which passed scores of landmark legislation. Terming the Bill as colourable legislation, it accused the government of foraying into an area where it had no right to pass laws.

The government, however, views the Lok Ayukta as an investigation mechanism, not a quasi-judicial body. It believes the current law is against the Act's preamble and glaringly lacks an appeal provision.

The LDF notes that the Lok Pal Act allowed States to pass and amend their respective Lok Ayukta laws. It argues that Article 164 of the Constitution mandated that the Governor appoint or dismiss the Council of Ministers. However, as per the current law, the Lok Ayukta could "destroy" a constitutionally elected government by an adverse ruling. The State could not even appeal against the Lok Ayukta's declaration under Section 14, which was final and binding.

Questions abound in the social and mainstream media about the Bill's motive. The UDF has viewed it as a Machiavellian move to forestall the ongoing anti-corruption investigations against Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

The government had initially pushed the Bill as an ordinance through the Cabinet, allegedly blindsiding the Communist Party of India (CPI), the second major partner in the LDF coalition. It introduced the amendment as a Bill after the Governor refused to re-promulgate the executive order.

The CPI has expressed reservations about the Bill, triggering widespread speculation that the government wanted to shred a proven law and perhaps the only remaining guardrail against corruption and nepotism.

The Bill comes at a time when an amendment to the Prevention of Corruption Act has made it mandatory for the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption to seek the government's prior permission to investigate or chargesheet government officials. The legal and political strife over the Bill is unlikely to end anytime soon.

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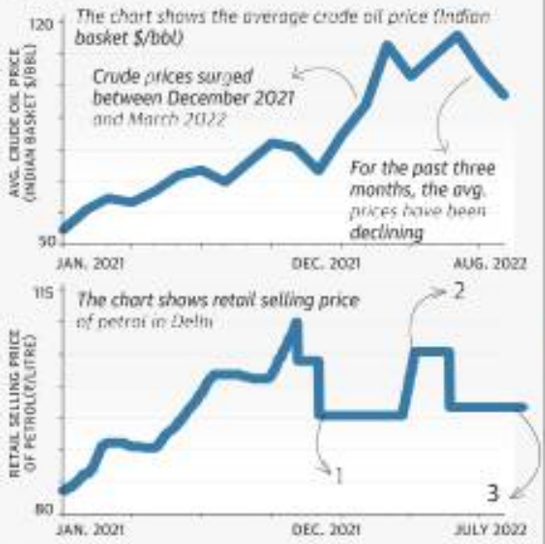
DATA POINT

The divergence between crude & pump prices

In the past 100 days, retail petrol prices have remained unchanged at the pump, whereas the crude prices (Indian basket) have reduced by around $20/barrel. The retail prices have possibly been kept at the same level to allow the Oil Marketing Companies (OMC) to compensate for the losses they incurred in the recent past. Between November 2021 and March 2022, despite international crude prices skyrocketing, the retail prices remained unchanged owing to the Assembly Elections in five States. A similar freeze was enforced in the recent months to curtail inflation. Such repeated interventions have resulted in heavy losses for the OMCs. Therefore, in the recent months, the OMCs have not revised the base price to make up for the losses. By **Jasmin Nihalani** and **Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

CRUDE MISMATCH | Between November 2021 and March 2022, retail petrol prices did not increase despite the price of crude oil going up significantly during the period, owing to the elections in five States



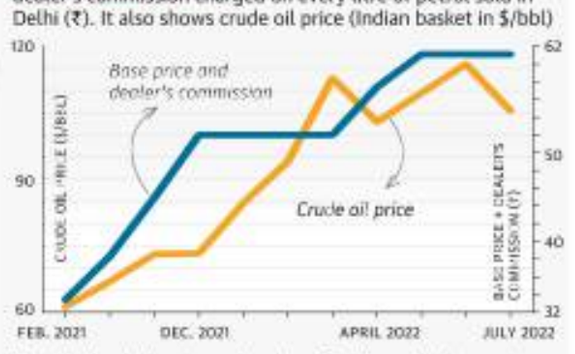
1 The freeze in petrol prices before the elections in five States

2 The ₹10/litre increase in retail price following the completion of elections

3 In June 2022, when the crude prices averaged $116/bbl, the retail selling price was ₹96.72/litre in Delhi. In July, when crude prices averaged $105/bbl, the retail prices stayed at ₹96.72.
In August, when crude prices further fell and averaged $97/bbl, the retail prices continued to remain at ₹96.72

INCURRING LOSSES | Chart shows the net profit/loss incurred by oil marketing companies in the first quarter of the past six financial years. Multiple price freezes in the past few months, despite an escalating crude oil price, have resulted in heavy losses for public sector oil marketing companies

BASE PRICE EFFECT | The chart shows the base price and dealer's commission charged on every litre of petrol sold in Delhi (₹). It also shows crude oil price (Indian basket in $/bbl)



Despite the decline in crude prices after June, the base price has not been revised by the OMCs to reflect the fall. This is possibly done to compensate for the losses in earlier periods

SOURCE: PPAC, IOCL, HPCL, BPCL

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 29, 1972

Vietnam war will be over: Nixon

New York, Aug. 28: President Nixon feels sure that the Vietnam war will be over soon and "not hanging over us in a second term." He said his conviction "derives from no spectacular breakthrough in Henry Kissinger's negotiation... but from my own reading of the logic of the situation in Vietnam." Therefore, President Nixon expects in the next four years to "be paying a lot of attention to our friends and allies – to the Latin Americans, Japan, especially Western Europe" and also to the West Asia difficulties. Mr. Nixon discussed foreign and domestic affairs in an interview published in Newsweek yesterday. Mr. Nixon said he expected that there would be a narrowing of the big lead shown for him in the present public opinion polls over the Democratic Party candidate, Mr. George McGovern. He said there would be "no complacency" in his attitude towards Mr. McGovern, but developments would dictate how vigorously he would campaign." Discussing foreign affairs, President Nixon was quoted as saying, "We have made a breakthrough with China and Russia. But as Winston Churchill said, this is not the beginning of the end – it is the end of the beginning. Now we have to exploit the breakthrough – the second phase of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, for example, and the ripening of our relations with China." He added that the U.S. should not underestimate the continuing "opposition" of China and the Soviet Union.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 29, 1922

Britain and France

London, Aug. 28: For the first time, two first rank powers appear in opposition before the League of Nations. The question in dispute is Tunis and Morocco, about which Britain has placed a motion on the next agenda. The British complain that the French have no right to impose the French nationality on British subjects born in Tunis and Morocco which are not French dominions but merely protectorates. Britain has frequently protested that British subjects of Maltese origin were handcuffed and compelled to join the French army. France contends that she possesses sovereign rights to impose nationality upon foreigners born in protectorates. France refused to submit the dispute to arbitration, whereupon Britain handed over the dispute to Council of the League which meets on August 30.

FROM PAGE ONE

Congress to elect its president on Oct. 17

He said the list of delegates should be published and pasted at the block, district and Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) offices. When Ms. Gandhi asked the chairman of the Central Election Authority (CEA), Madhusudan Mistry, to clarify, he said that these lists had been verified, sources said. The list would be made available to the PCCs and to any candidate who wishes to contest, he added.

At the press conference held after the CWC meeting, when reporters raised questions about Mr. Sharma's intervention, party's general secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh asserted that no questions were asked.

But Mr. Mistry said, "Those who have raised this question have gone through this very process. So I don't want to comment on it."

Later, in a tweet, Mr. Ramesh again insisted that no questions were raised on the electoral process. "There is some dubious 'source-based' plantation going on that questions were raised in CWC meeting today on the Congress President's election process and schedule. This is to make absolutely clear that nobody raised any question or any doubt." However, when asked about his comments during the CWC meet, Mr. Sharma confirmed the exchange to *The Hindu*.

Sources also said that this CWC meeting could be Ms. Gandhi's very last one and to avoid any embarrassing or awkward exchanges, it was decided at an informal meeting of a few CWC members to omit any references to Mr. Azad or make fresh appeals for Mr. Gandhi's return. On Monday, party's Jammu and Kashmir incharge Rajni Patil will be visiting the UT and holding a series of meetings with the leaders.

To boost self-reliance, Rajnath releases third indigenisation list

Defence Minister sets timeline for import ban on 780 crucial equipment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In line with the effort to promote self-reliance in defence manufacturing, and minimising imports by the defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs), Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday approved the third Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) of 780 strategically important line replacement units (LRU), sub-systems and components, with a timeline beyond which they will only be procured from the domestic industry.

This is different from the three PILs announced for the armed forces.

"This list is in continuation to the two PILs of LRUs, sub-systems, assemblies, sub-assemblies and components that were published in December 2021 and March 2022. These lists contain 2,500 items which are already indigenised and 458 (351+107) items which will be indigenised within the given timelines," a Ministry statement said.

Out of the 458 items, 167 items (163 from the first PIL, and four from the second PIL) have been indigenised, so far, it stated.

Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari during a recent visit to Bengaluru, where he flew the indigenously made *Tejas*. • PTI

'Achieve self-reliance'

The Ministry explained that indigenisation of these items will be taken up through different routes under the 'Make' category of procurement procedure. The 'Make' category aims to achieve self-reliance with greater participation by the Indian industry, and projects involving the design and development of equipment, systems, major platforms or upgrades thereof by the industry can be taken up under this category.

"The indigenous development of these LRUs, sub-systems and components will bolster the economy and reduce the import dependence of DPSUs," the statement said, adding that it will also help harness the design capabilities of the domestic defence industry, and position India as a design leader in these technologies.

The DPSUs will soon float Expressions of Interest (EoI) and Requests for Proposals (RfP) in line with this, the statement added.

Shelter home official held in Bihar sexual abuse case

Three girls have complained of abuse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA

Inmates of yet another shelter home in Bihar have alleged sexual abuse, leading to the arrest of the State-run care home's in-charge here, a senior police officer said on Sunday. The superintendent of Gaighat shelter home, following his arrest on Saturday, was produced before a court and remanded in judicial custody.

"An SIT has been constituted to look into complaints of physical abuse. In statements recorded before a magistrate under Section 164 of the Cr.PC, three girls complained of sexual abuse. A few more said they were often beaten up by the superintendent," Manavjeet Singh Dhillon, Senior Superintendent of Police, Patna, said.

He, however, added that most of the inmates gave statements that were "very vague and gave little clue of involvement of any other people".

"Nonetheless, we are trying to probe deeper with the help of whatever information we have," the SSP said.

Notably, the State had been in news for the infamous Muzaffarpur shelter home scandal, which came to light in a social audit conducted by Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

A huge outcry had ensued, causing the Nitish Kumar government to order a CBI inquiry, the then Social Welfare Minister Manju Verma to resign and the then Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh to make a statement in Parliament. Trial in the case was finally shifted to Delhi and Brajesh Thakur, the prime accused, was awarded life sentence.

India refers to Taiwan Strait 'militarisation'

The reference to Taiwan, in a statement late on Saturday issued by the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka, marked a more pronounced expression over the situation in the Taiwan Strait than its previous response on August 12 to China's military drills. These activities were conducted in the wake of the visit by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Earlier this month, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) did not refer to "militarisation" of the Strait, only saying India was "concerned at recent developments" and "urge[d] exercise of restraint, avoidance of unilateral actions to change status quo, de-escalation of tensions and efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region". When asked at an August 12 briefing if India would, as Beijing had requested, reiterate its commitment to a "One China policy", the MEA said "India's relevant policies are well-known and consistent" and "do not require reiteration".

The latest reference to Taiwan came amid a spat with China over the visit this month of a Chinese military tracking vessel, *Yuan Wang 5*, to Hambantota in Sri Lanka.

Responding sharply to remarks made by the Chinese Ambassador in Sri Lanka referring to "aggression" faced by Sri Lanka from its "northern neighbour", the Indian High Commission termed his comments "a violation of basic diplomatic etiquette", saying they "may be a personal trait or reflecting a larger national attitude".

The High Commission said the statement was "in response to queries concerning the article by Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka which, inter alia, drew connection between militarisation of Taiwan Straits and visit of China's *Yuan Wang 5* ship to Hambantota."

G7 concerns

Earlier this month, Foreign Ministers of the G7 – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the U.K., and the U.S. – expressed concerns about China's military activity in the Strait, referring to "threatening actions" by China and saying there was "no justification to use a visit as pretext for aggressive military activity in the Taiwan Strait".

In the recent article, the Chinese envoy to Sri Lanka rejected that charge.

"China has every reason to respond unhesitantly to the severe impacts caused by the Taiwan visit of Speaker Pelosi," he said.

He drew a link between the Taiwan situation and the visit of the *Yuan Wang 5*, which India had opposed.

"Those two matters may seem irrelevant and thousands of miles apart, but both share a same great significance between China and Sri Lanka, that is to jointly safeguard each other's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity," he said.

One China policy

Sri Lanka was among the countries that supported China by reiterating the "One China policy" amid the Taiwan tensions.

India has followed a "One China policy" since its recognition of the PRC in 1949, and only maintains trade and cultural relations with Taiwan. India routinely reiterated this policy until 2008, after which it stopped mentioning it in official statements, a demand that China usually asks of most countries in official declarations.

Noida's twin towers turned into rubble

Officials begin audit of other nearby buildings

ISHITA MISHRA
NOIDA

The countdown started at exactly 50 seconds past 2.29 p.m. Ten seconds later, the twin towers – 32-storey Apex tower and 29-storey Ceyane tower – which stood tall for the past 10 years at Noida Sector 93A, disappeared from view. The over 100-metre-high structures – taller than the Qutb Minar – left 85,000 kg of debris and a thick cloud of dust around.

Soon after the dust settled, officials and others began a structural audit of the adjoining buildings.

The Supreme Court ordered the demolition of the towers on August 31, 2021, for violating building norms in "collusion with district officials, holding that illegal construction has to be dealt with strictly".

Dust and din: Supertech's twin towers in Noida go down on Sunday in a waterfall implosion technique. • R.V. MOORTHY

Nine more judges for Calcutta HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Nine judicial officers were on Sunday elevated as additional judges of the Calcutta High Court, the Law Ministry said.

According to a notification issued by the Department of Justice in the Law Ministry, the nine new additional judges have been appointed for a period of two years.

Usually, additional judges are appointed for a period of two years and then elevated as permanent judges.

Those appointed are Biswaroop Chowdhury, Partha Sarathi Sen, Prasenjit Biswas, Uday Kumar, Ajay Kumar Gupta, Supratim Bhattacharya, Partha Sarathi Chatterjee, Apurba Sinha Ray and Mohammed Shabbar Rashidi, in that order of seniority.

'India, China are allies of Vietnam'

India, Vietnam share same position on ongoing situation in Europe, says envoy

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Both India and China are comprehensive strategic partners of Vietnam and "we do not take sides", says outgoing Vietnamese envoy in India Pham Sanh Chau. India and Vietnam supported each other at the United Nations Security Council as non-permanent members and also share the same position, the "middle path or Buddha path" on the ongoing situation in Europe, he adds.

In a conversation with *The Hindu* before his departure after a four-year stint, the envoy listed handling the COVID-19 pandemic without any casualty, construction of the new Embassy building, launch of direct flights between the two countries, and issuing a record number of 6,000 visas a day to Indians as some of the major achievements.

Pham Sanh Chau
• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

On defence cooperation, Mr. Pham said visit of Vietnamese ships to India and participation in multilateral exercise 'Milan' happened for the first time. "Just last week, for the first time ever in Vietnam history, we sent 45 officers to India for training in UN peacekeeping operations. It reflects the very deep convergence of strategic interest between the two countries and the mutual trust. After the training they will be deployed in South Sudan," he stated.

Talking of regional developments including the South China Sea, the envoy said Vietnam follows a foreign policy of being friendly with all countries and follows the principle of 'four no's' – not to join any military alliance, not to go with one country to fight another country, not to allow land to be used by another country and not to use force. Stating that China is a comprehensive strategic partner of Vietnam, an immediate neighbour and a major power, Mr. Pham said they give importance to that relationship and nurture it.

India is also a key partner like others which is very natural and it is important for other countries to understand that principle, the envoy stressed. "We don't tend to go with India in order to fight against China. We don't take a side, no zero sum game. We take the side of peace, the side of international law. India and China are all our good friends. They are both our strategic, comprehensive partners."

Following the implementation of the $100 million defence Line of Credit (LoC) extended by India for procurement of 12 high speed boats by Vietnam, Mr. Pham said discussions are underway on operationalising the $500 million LoC with major focus on manufacturing in Vietnam.

'Centre stands against Constitutional values'

Yogendra Yadav slams 'hegemony'

STAFF REPORTER
MADURAI

A campaign like *Bharat Jodo* (unite India) *Yatra* is essential to counter the conscious attempt made by the ruling BJP government to divide and rule India like the British, activist Yogendra Yadav on Sunday, adding that the initiative brings together political parties and members of various peoples' movements to counter the hegemony of the regime.

Yogendra Yadav

"We are not wedded to the Congress. [However] we extend our support to this initiative of the Congress. The country needs *Bharat Jodo Yatra*," he said.

"Anyone taking on the BJP feels lonely and there is a need to break the spell to strengthen the hands of those who counter the regime," he emphasised.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Yadav said India was being divided on various lines, including religion – particularly between Hindus and Muslims, COVID-19 pandemic, demonetisation and issues pertaining to school uniforms. The ruling party has decided to distract people in order to divide and rule. "We have a Central government that stands against constitutional values," he said. The Constitution provides for a balance between the Centre and State. A completely unitary form of government is against the Constitution and the spirit of the freedom movement and the civilisation, he said.

"Federalism is not a threat to the country. Any attempt to turn India into a unitary State will destroy India," he said.

The resurgence of DMK is a "bulwark" against BJP's progress, he said. The DMK-led Tamil Nadu government follows the Dravidian model, which was based on regional pride, social justice and deep secularism or rationalism, he pointed out, adding that this model should be followed across the country.

Modi urges people to join fight against malnourishment

Highlighting collective effort witnessed during *Amrit Mahotsav* celebrations, PM wants everyone to contribute to the cause

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday exhorted the nation to fight "malnutrition", stressing that social awareness was crucial for this fight. He also applauded the collective spirit in celebrating the Tricolour as part of the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* marking 75 years of India's Independence.

In his monthly *Mann Ki Baat* radio broadcast, Mr. Modi said the "*amrit dhara*" (flow of nectar) of the *Amrit Mahotsav* was flowing in all corners of the country in this month. "On the special occasion of *Amrit Mahotsav* and Independence Day, we have seen the collective might of the country," he said.

This very collective might should also be used to campaign against malnutrition in the coming month (September), he said. Mr. Modi said there were many creative and diverse efforts being undertaken against malnutrition. "Better use of technology and public participation have also become an important part of the Poshan Abhiyan. The Jal Jeevan Mission is going to have a big impact in making India malnutrition free," he added.

September, apart from witnessing the celebration of a host of festivals across the country, would also be marked as "*Poshan Maah*" (nutrition month), the PM said. Malnutrition, he noted, could be removed only with social awareness, asking for each person to contribute in the campaign. Mr. Modi mentioned the ongoing 'Project Sampoorna' programme in Assam, under which the mother of a healthy child meets the mother of a malnourished child every week at an *anganwadi* centre and discusses information related to nutrition. He also spoke of efforts from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, where songs and games are key tools in ending malnutrition.

> **Better use of technology and public participation have also become an important part of 'Poshan Abhiyan'**
> NARENDRA MODI
> Prime Minister

With the UN accepting India's proposal to observe 2023 as the International Year of Millets, Mr. Modi lauded their nutritional benefits. He said it had been his endeavour to serve dishes made from Indian millets to foreign guests visiting India.

"Our experience has been that these dignitaries have very much relished them and [they] also try to collect a lot of information about our coarse grains, about millets. Coarse grains have been a part of our agriculture, culture and civilisation since ancient times," he noted.

Mr. Modi also spoke about increasing digital connectivity in remote parts of the country. He cited the example of Jorsing village in Arunachal Pradesh, which has been receiving 4G Internet services from Independence Day.

"There has been a new sunrise in the form of 4G in the remote areas of Arunachal and the northeast. Internet connectivity has brought a new dawn. Facilities once available only in big cities have been brought to every village through Digital India. For this reason, new digital entrepreneurs are rising in the country," the PM said.

Mr. Modi cited examples from different parts of the country, boosting businesses via online facilities.

APPEAL

I am **Ayyappan aged 6 years old**, suffering from Beta Thalassemia Major and need to undergo Allogenic Bone Marrow Transplantation which cost **Rs.16,00,000/-** at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. I belong to a very poor family and cannot afford this huge expenditure. Kindly help me. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring **Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged.** The donations sent through Ch/D.D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063318, IFSC No. CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT.

All correspondence is done through **WWS**, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, **Flat No.GF 1, Corddel Apartments, D.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044-42137401/28235324/7338978027. E Mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com** Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

Ayyappan

INTERVIEW | ASHWINI VAISHNAW

'Working on a comprehensive legal framework for digital economy'

We have consistently held that India's laws must be implemented by every company operating in the country, says Minister for Electronics and Information Technology

VARGHESE K. GEORGE
YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

Union Minister for Railways, Communication, and Electronics and Information Technology **Ashwini Vaishnaw** *talks about the policy road map for the digital economy, the focus on making India Atmanirbhar (self-sufficient) in telecom technology, and the recent allegations that the Indian government forced Twitter to employ its agent. He also talks about the government's plans to improve amenities for railway customers, bring in new engines and upgrade trains, along with efforts to boost revenues from freight services.*

What is the policy road map you have envisaged for the telecom and IT sectors?

■ We are working on a comprehensive legal framework for the digital economy. It has four dimensions. First is telecom. Telecom is the primary medium of accessing digital services. So, a new telecom Bill to replace laws made in 1885 and 1930 is at an advanced stage of drafting. The stakeholder consultation process is about to be completed. Second will be the data protection Bill. Third is a comprehensive digital India Act that we are preparing to replace the IT Act of 2000 vintage. These are three Bills. Now beyond this, there are certain policy frameworks, for example the national data framework that we have uploaded for consultation, then cybersecurity framework... these are outside the law, but more like a policy framework because of the ever-changing technology landscape.

There won't be a separate law for cybersecurity?

■ Cybersecurity is a constantly evolving area. Globally, it has been dealt with a techno-legal framework where technology plays a big role and policy is there to support the technology. I don't think that by putting a law for cybersecurity the threat will vanish. It has to be a techno-legal solution. For that, we have to continuously invest in infrastructure, new processes, training people and making common citizens aware. However, we have to be always on alert to counter ever new threats.

Twitter's ex-security chief Peiter Zatko has alleged that the company may not have the competency to protect its users and their data. Comment

■ That's a very serious concern. If they have any flaws in data protection, they will be held accountable. We expect that each and every social media platform should utilise the best available technologies. They should definitely do everything that is required to protect users' data. And it is mandated by their own policies...this is a very fair expectation. If they don't do it, of course they would be held accountable.

Mr. Zatko has also alleged that the Indian government forced the microblogging platform to put a government agent on its payroll and grant access to sensitive user data?

■ I read in the news that Twitter has categorically denied this in front of the parliamentary committee.

From a policy perspective, how is the government looking at balancing privacy with using data to offer better services?

■ The principles of data protection and privacy are now well established all over the world. What is important is to create an easily implementable, highly accessible implementation structure, so that the citizens living in remote areas can also get the same level of grievance redress mechanism that citizens living in cities would get. That is what we need to really work upon – accessible, inclusive, and equitable structure. When a citizen gives data to the government based on a consent framework, and the government uses data analytics to provide better service... as long as it is part of that consent, it fits into all the principles.

Our focus now is to make sure that the implementation of these principles and data protection framework should be in tune with the modern times, should be accessible to everybody, should be very easy to implement and should be born digital. It should not be like we are trying to create a paper system for a digital world. The new draft should be out soon, and we will bring it to Parliament in the Budget Session.

For content removal from social media platforms, will the law enforcement of the country – and not the companies – have the final authority?

■ Yes. This framework is there across the world. If you look at the per capita number of requests made for taking down content that is not in consonance with the laws of the country, India is among the lowest. Our country's laws must be followed by anybody who is working in India. It cannot be that they (social media companies) say that 'this is my idea of what the Constitution should be'. We have consistently held that India's laws must be implemented by every company operating in the country.

Where will the equipment for 5G network largely come from?

■ It will not just be foreign companies. We are building a strong ecosystem in India. In fact, by next year, we will be exporting telecom technology to the world. The whole technology stack for telecom services comprises four distinct parts: core network, radio network, telecom equipment and mobile handsets. C-DOT (The Centre for Development of Telematics) and a consortium of academic institutions have developed and tested a very robust core for 4G. On 4G core, they have now built a 5G core, which is almost ready. Reliance Jio has also developed their own core. Then, we have the radio network, which interacts between the consumer and the tower. Our PLI scheme and the start-up ecosystem has today brought out at least six radio designers and manufacturers. We are integrating all these radios in the C-DOT core. So, building that ecosystem means that we can now take our solution to the world. Similarly, in telecom equipment manufacturing, with the PLI scheme, 30 telecom equipment manufacturers have invested and started production. The fourth part is mobile handset. Close to 25% of all the mobile handsets manufactured in India today are 5G-enabled. Manufacturers are ready to ramp the production of 5G devices up to 70%-80%. Entry level 5G handset today costs about ₹15,000 and is likely to come down to ₹10,000-₹12,000 very soon. There are about six or seven developed countries whose telecom services providers have sent serious definitive inquiries to Indian system integrators as to when the C-DOT technology stack will be fully ready. It is ready and tested, and soon it will be rolled out across the country on 1 lakh sites. Once it is installed on let's say 15,000-20,000 sites then technology is treated as proven.

So, we will have those credentials and by next year we will be ready to export telecom technology to the world. So this is one sector where Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision is being realised very well.

SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

If you look at the per capita number of requests made for taking down content that is not in consonance with the laws of the country, India is among the lowest

What about manufacturing semiconductors?

■ We are making excellent progress. Typically, these decisions take 14 to 18 months. January 1 this year is when we uploaded the policy. Hopefully, we should be able to conclude this entire process within this year itself and the first fab may get going this year. It could in fact be multiple fabs along with a very good design ecosystem. The world is looking for a reliable and trusted partner like India.

The Cabinet recently approved a ₹1.64 lakh-crore relief package for State-owned BSNL. This follows a similar ₹70,000-crore package announced in 2019. What gives you the confidence of a turnaround this time?

■ The package of 2019 has made BSNL a stable entity. Last financial year it made operating profit (at the EBITA level). Now from this level, we have to make it a growing company in terms of number of subscribers, revenue and profitability.

For this, the first step we are taking is to give a very robust 4G network to BSNL. C-DOT-developed technology under PM's Atmanirbhar Bharat programme has been rigorously tested. We will roll out the 4G network in the coming months and very rapidly we'll upgrade it to 5G. So, by the end of 2023, BSNL would have started offering 5G services which will increase the revenue potential and the number of customers.

The second big thing in BSNL is the very significant increase in the number of broadband subscribers. Today BSNL is adding close to 1 lakh new fibre connections every month. These two elements are the revenue items.

Third, our laser sharp focus on reducing the cost and increasing the revenue. So that gives a clear directional thrust to BSNL's journey and we believe that BSNL will become a good market stabilising force in the coming years. BSNL is also playing a very important role in reaching out to the unconnected places and bridging the digital divide. For MTNL, most of the work has already shifted to BSNL. MTNL's balance sheet is very complex, it has a huge debt on it, so we are working on it.

For the Railways, is the current growth in freight services enough to offset losses from passenger services?

■ Hon'ble PM has given us a very clear mandate that the entire passenger experience has to totally transform. The first thing in this is railway stations. So today about 50 railway stations are getting totally redeveloped to world-class standards.

Second is getting a new generation of trains. The new Vande Bharat train is getting tested for 180 kmph speed and the results are excellent. Simultaneously, we are working on totally new types of engines with 9,000 hp engines. Conventionally, we have been doing 4,000 hp and 6,000 hp.

The new engines are the latest technology of engines and will be designed and manufactured in India. Then for short point-to-point distances, for example, 30 km-40 km from a big city a totally new generation of metro trains which will run on the Indian railway tracks is being manufactured. These will replace the MEMU and DEMU trains. So we are upgrading the entire spectrum of trains. And over the next two years, you will see all these things coming on to the tracks.

The third is the safety of passengers. We are scaling up installation of Kavach (indigenously developed train protection system) to 3,000 km this year as against the Budget target of 2,000 km.

On the cargo side, last year we added 185 million tonnes (MT) extra. This is phenomenal as in the past Railways added 20MT-30MT. This year, we are on track to add almost a similar amount of new cargo. Over the past 70 years, the Railways has been losing its market share to the road and last year we started the journey of gaining market share. This journey will continue this year. That will have a big impact on India's logistics cost. The only way to reduce it is to have more and more rail share. Our passenger subsidy is now ₹62,000 crore... nearly 55% subsidy given to everybody. So how do we fill that gap? That gap has to come from having more and more cargo. So all these initiatives will transform passenger experience on Indian Railways.

With the improvement in amenities, is there a case for raising fares?

■ We are not considering raising passenger fares. Over the last eight years the Railways has consistently moved in a direction of improving passenger amenities, improving the passenger experience – from cleanliness to running trains on time to having station amenities... Simultaneously we are focusing on having more cargo. The result of eight years is now visible.

Will we be able to achieve a 96% operating ratio this year?

■ With the huge passenger subsidy of ₹62,000 crore and pension expenses of ₹55,000 crore and salary and wage bill of ₹1 lakh crore, the social obligations of Railways are more important. Profit is not the motive. Within all these socio political and economic constraints we are doing everything possible to balance revenue and expenses.

Timelines for the key dedicated freight corridors project has seen multiple extensions. What is the current status of the project?

■ The project started in 2007. Till 2014, the number of tracks commissioned was zero km. Since 2014, we have commissioned 1,350 km and that is a huge number. It has started operating and running about 180 trains a day. We have started getting the benefits of two freight corridors.

New CJI's stint to start off with a host of civil liberties cases

Cases in the first week include those of Kappan's bail and the Karnataka hijab ban

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has a host of cases – the right to personal and civil liberties of journalist Siddique Kappan, activists Gautam Navlakha and Teesta Setalvad, and the long-pending appeals filed by students against the Karnataka hijab ban – lined up in the first working week of its new "master of roster", Chief Justice U.U. Lalit.

A Bench of Chief Justice Lalit and Justice S. Ravindra Bhat is scheduled to hear Mr. Kappan's plea for bail on Monday.

The Kerala journalist, represented by advocate Haris Beeran, said he has already spent two years behind bars on "trumped-up charges" merely due to his zest to discharge his professional duty to report on the "infamous case" of the alleged rape and murder of a Dalit girl at Hathras in Uttar Pradesh in 2020.

Final resort: Siddique Kappan, first from right, is booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. • FILE PHOTO

Mr. Kappan is booked under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. He was picked up while *en route* to Hathras on October 5, 2020.

The same Bench is also hearing an appeal filed by activist Gautam Navlakha, an accused in the Bhima Koregaon case, against a Bombay High Court decision to reject his request to be shifted from Taloja jail and placed under house arrest.

Chief Justice Lalit's Bench is also scheduled to take up a plea for bail filed by activist Teesta Setalvad on August 30. Ms. Setalvad is accused of fabricating evidence to frame top functionaries of the Gujarat government in a case related to the 2002 riots. The Gujarat government had on August 25 sought to downplay the urgency of the case, saying there was nothing "special" about it. Justice Lalit, who was sworn in as CJI on Saturday, said that though there may not be anything "special" in the case, the court would still have to consider and test whether her incarceration was necessary at all.

The prompt listing of these cases on Chief Justice Lalit's first week as top judge has gained public notice amid cynicism about the court's role in protecting civil liberties.

Fathima Bushra, a student of a Government Pre-University College in Karnataka, will also get a hearing after months of delay. Her petition challenging her "debarment" from attending regular classes for wearing the hijab was never listed for hearing despite repeated oral mentionings through April, May and even in July.

Modi inaugurates canal in Kutch

He alleges conspiracy to malign Gujarat during his tenure as State Chief Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday there had been conspiracies to defame Gujarat and stop investments in his home State when he was the Chief Minister from 2001 to 2014.

However, Gujarat not only ignored the efforts to malign the State but continued to chart a new path of development and progress, which led to all round development across its regions, Mr. Modi said while addressing a public rally after inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of development works in Kutch district.

The Gujarat Assembly election is slated for December.

The Prime Minister also held a roadshow in Bhuj, and addressed a rally after inaugurating the Narmada canal that will bring water to parched Kutch from the Narmada Sarovar dam in south Gujarat. During his visit to Kutch, Mr. Modi also inaugurated a memorial in the memory of the thousands of victims of the 2001 earthquake that devastated Kutch.

Strong ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Suzuki Motor Corp. former chairman Osamu Suzuki and president Toshihiro Suzuki. Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel is also seen. • VIJAY SONEJI

"While Gujarat was dealing with the natural calamity, the period of conspiracies started. There were conspiracies to defame Gujarat in the country and the world. Repeated attempts were made to stop investment coming to the State, but the State chose a new path of progress," he said.

According to Mr. Modi, after the earthquake, the State government had focused on the Kutch district, which was then known as "very backward" but the government's efforts led to massive industrial development across the district.

"Ignoring all the efforts for defaming Gujarat and defying the conspiracies, Gujarat charted a new industrial path. Kutch was one of the big beneficiaries of that process," Mr. Modi added.

He also highlighted how, while tackling the worst natural calamity, Gujarat became the first State in the country to bring in a Disaster Management Act, which became a model Act and was replicated nationally. "With the inspiration of this Act, a similar law was made for the whole country. This Act helped every government in the country during the pandemic," he said.

He said that the way Kutch had emerged as the most industrialised district in the State after the devastating quake, India would similarly become a developed nation by 2047, as resolved by the Government of India and the people of the country.

PM lays foundation stones for Maruti Suzuki projects

AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday laid the foundation stone for Maruti Suzuki's projects in Gujarat and Haryana, as the Japanese auto mobile giant is commemorating 40 years of its presence in India. He lauded the company's success in India, terming it a bright example of India-Japan partnership.

Soren enjoying picnic with MLAs while State comes to a halt: BJP

It demands resignation of Jharkhand CM over mining lease

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
RANCHI

As the suspense over the fate of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren continues to raise the political temperatures in the State, the Opposition BJP on Sunday lashed out at him over his "picnic" on a boat with MLAs at Latratu dam in Khunti district the day before.

Senior BJP leader Babulal Marandi said the Chief Minister was "busy enjoying a picnic", while the entire State machinery had come to a halt. His colleague and former Minister Bhanu Pratap Shahi demanded Mr. Soren's resignation ahead of any formal declaration of his disqualification as an MLA by the Governor.

The Election Commission is believed to have sent a missive recommending the disqualification of Mr. Soren as a legislator in a mining lease case to Governor Ramesh Bais on Friday. However, no action has been initiated so far.

The ruling UPA alliance, led by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha ruled out any resignation at this stage and asserted that it had the strength to continue its rule.

Both parties have maintained that they would firmly stand behind Mr. Soren.

J&K Congress goes into huddle to keep flock intact

Taj Mohiuddin quits; State unit swears allegiance to AICC led by Sonia, Rahul

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Top leaders of the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Congress got into a huddle on Sunday in Srinagar amid reports that prominent faces are likely to quit and join former Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, who is likely to float a new party.

The meeting came as senior leader Taj Mohiuddin quit the party and joined Mr. Azad.

"We appeal to the rank and file of the party to stand united at this crucial juncture against the divisive forces," a joint statement issued by top 14 leaders of the Congress unit read.

The "extraordinary meeting" of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee was held at the residence of former Union Minister Saifuddin Soz.

The meeting was attended by senior leader Peerzada Muhammad Sayeed, president of J&K PCC Viqar Rasool Wani, former J&K PCC president G.A. Mir, former MP Tariq Hameed Karra and former Minister Raman Bhalla.

Saifuddin Soz

The leaders described Mr. Azad's resignation as "an unfortunate development, especially when our leader Sonia Gandhi is abroad seeking treatment for herself". The leaders reiterated that the J&K unit would remain steadfast with the All India Congress Committee led by Ms. Gandhi and former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi.

'No ties with BJP'

Mr. Mohiuddin said Mr. Azad's personal relations with the BJP or Prime Minister Narendra Modi "doesn't mean he will have political relations with the BJP". Mr. Taj termed the accusations of Mr. Azad being in tow with the BJP as "rumours being spread in the Valley".

"If there will be any need to join with any party, they will go with the National Conference or the Peoples Democratic Party," he added. "I, on behalf of Azad *sahab*, want to make it clear that we have nothing to do with the BJP and we have no ties with them in any way. The day I come to know that this party has any links with the BJP I will resign that day itself," Mr. Taj said.

However, Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party president Syed Altaf Bukhari said Mr. Azad "has struck a deal with the BJP and was responsible for the revocation of Article 370".

INTERVIEW | KEVIN RUDD

'With multiple border sub-disputes..., India, China in for a rocky period'

Former Australian PM says Beijing is sending a clear message that China won't turn back, and is in the process of prosecuting its full territorial aspirations

SUHASINI HAIDAR

There are parallels between China's actions at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and tensions between China and the U.S. over Taiwan, says former Australian Prime Minister and China watcher **Kevin Rudd**. *Mr. Rudd, who is the author of a new book,* The Avoidable War: The Dangers of a Catastrophic Conflict between the U.S. and Xi Jinping's China, *and the President of the Asia Society, is in Delhi for the launch of a new policy institute, to be inaugurated by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Monday. Excerpts:*

How do you see the U.S. and China tensions over Taiwan?

■ My analysis is that Xi Jinping's China is different in two fundamental ways. The first is that the balance of power has changed between China and the United States: militarily, economically, and technologically.

The second is the particular agency of Xi Jinping's leadership. Xi Jinping is not a "status quo" politician; he is a "let's change the game" politician, [focused on] China's national ambitions to be the pre-eminent regional and global power by 2049 and to reincorporate Taiwan on the way through.

Since 2017, United States has recognised this challenge, named this challenge, and defined this relationship as one of strategic competition. And the winner of this competitive race is who either remains or becomes the dominant regional global power.

Do you think there is a timeline for when Xi Jinping hopes to "reincorporate" Taiwan?

■ Xi Jinping has said that China's great 'national rejuvenation' cannot be achieved in the absence of Taiwan, and that programme has a timetable of 2049. Xi Jinping has also brought forward the date for the completion of China's military reform and modernisation programme from 2035 to 2027.

In my judgment, Xi will automatically be reappointed General Secretary of the Communist Party for a third term this October/November at the 20th Party Congress and that he is looking towards at least another three terms, taking him through to 2037.

So, what I am most concerned about is that China's internal timetable [for Taiwan] is likely to be late 2020s, early 2030s. I am more concerned about crisis escalation, conflict and war by accident, between now and then.

Given this scenario, should India strengthen the Quad arrangement with Australia, Japan and the United States, or keep the present balance as a member of the SCO and BRICS with Russia and China?

■ The two options available to India and other countries, given China's assertiveness, is to bandwagon or to balance. I don't see it in India's nature to bandwagon with China, given the unresolved nature of the Sino-Indian border. Therefore, the alternative strategic course is balancing.

R.V. MOORTHY

The Quad obviously represents one fairly prominent example of balancing, by India, Japan, the United States and Australia. AUKUS at a different level reflects much the same dynamic. But also you see the hardening of the European Union and NATO in terms of strategic posture towards China as well.

> **What I have seen is remarkable stability and maturity in Indian diplomacy to continue to find the off-ramps**

Despite the LAC stand-off since 2020, the Indian government has kept the door open for talks for military and Foreign Minister-level talks. Is this the way forward or do you see, like in Taiwan, a possible flashpoint?

■ After the border clashes of April-May of 2020, the Chinese, at least in one part of the border (at Ladakh), have chosen to double down, to build hard infrastructure behind those new positions, and rather than "tactically withdraw", leave every evidence that China has consolidated.

I think in terms of concrete, political and diplomatic messaging from the Chinese side, they are sending a clear message that China is not for turning back, and that it is in the process of prosecuting its full territorial aspirations to the allowable strategic limit.

And there, I see a clear analogy with South China Sea, Taiwan, East China Sea.

As to India's response to that emerging new Chinese strategy, that of course, is a matter for the government in Delhi [to decide]. They have been dealing with this effectively since 1962, and effectively in a different way prior to 1962.

And so it would not be appropriate for me to tell Delhi what to do.

Your book terms the mounting conflict between U.S. and China as the avoidable war. Do you think the conflict or the next conflict between India and China is avoidable as well?

■ I am not sufficiently expert in the granularity of the border. But when you have multiple sub-disputes along the border, an ongoing challenge in Kashmir, the unfolding dynamic of Pakistani politics, and Pakistan's "all-weather" alliance with Beijing, I think [India and China] are in for a rocky period ahead.

What I have seen, however, is remarkable stability and maturity in Indian diplomacy to continue to find the off-ramps and there are a number within the Chinese system which are always looking for off-ramps as well; even though the evidence on the ground so far, at least from Beijing's perspective, is to push ahead.

There are reports indicating a possible meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping at international conferences. How effective could summitry be in resolving the issues?

■ The Chinese strategic culture is to observe what states do, not what they say. Therefore, concrete strategic behaviours, and actions by India on the border, or in its relationship with the United States, or its Quadrilateral relationship... these are the things which China observes, takes note of, and then analyses in terms of how it should respond.

And China respects strength and is contemptuous of weakness. So, summitry can be enormously powerful when it rests on those underlying realistic assumptions.

Frankly, it's Xi Jinping that counts within the system, the rest of the system doesn't count for much in the ultimate decision-making processes of the Chinese system.

Therefore, for important global political leaders like Prime Minister Modi, how they engage Xi Jinping directly matters, because the rest of the system is much weaker, than it was under Xi Jinping's predecessors.

Full interview on bit.ly/3RO43uw

Akasa Air suffers data breach

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Akasa Air recently suffered a data breach related to its login and sign-up service, the airline said in an email to its passengers.

"A temporary technical configuration error related to our login and sign-up service was reported to us on Thursday August 25, 2022. As a result of this configuration error, some Akasa Air registered user information limited to names, gender, email addresses and phone numbers may have been viewed by unauthorised individuals," the airline said in a statement.

It added that no travel-related information, travel records or payment information was compromised.

It did not say how many users were likely affected or mention the duration of the security violation. It said that it was made aware of the situation by a research expert through a journalist, but according to its records there was no intentional hacking attempt.

"We will continue to maintain our robust security protocols, engaging wherever applicable, with partners, researchers, and security experts from whom we can benefit to strengthen our systems," Anand Srinivasan, Co-Founder of Akasa Air, said about the incident.

5G cells to piggyback on poles, hoardings

Base stations deployed will bring network closer to people

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

To expedite the roll-out of 5G, telecom operators in the country will leverage street furniture such as poles, advertisement hoardings and bus shelters for deploying low-power base stations called 'small cells' that will help bring the network closer to the consumers.

"Small cells are needed for deploying 5G as opposed to earlier generations such as 4G, because of the frequency. The higher the frequency, the lower the wavelength, which means that the distance they travel is less," S.P. Kochhar, director-general at the Cellular Operators Association of India, said.

He added that for higher frequencies in the range of 3.3-3.6 GHz, which are expected to be used for offering 5G services, the waves will travel 100-150 metres. At present, telecom towers, which are about 30 metres high, are placed at a distance of about 5 km apart.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has also issued a consultation paper on the "Use of street furniture for small cell and aerial fibre deployment", wherein it states that small cells will play a critical role in the success of 5G as these are needed to exploit features of 5G such as support low latency, ultra-high speeds, and massive connection densities.

Leveraging of existing street infrastructure will save the hassle of erecting new poles along roadsides.

Small cells are low-powered radio access nodes or base stations that have a coverage range from a few metres up to a few hundred metres. They are portable, easy to deploy and help provide localised coverage. As per the TRAI paper, small cells provide coverage for very short distances and therefore they are installed in a large number – even more than 200 per square kilometre – for good geographical coverage to provide highly reliable and high-capacity broadband.

Mr. Kochhar added that lower height (6-7 metres) poles are sufficient to install small cells, and a good ecosystem of such poles already exists in the form of street lights, electricity and traffic lights poles. "We expect to cover about 100 meters radius from each pole for the coverage to be adequate," Mr. Kocchar said.

Leveraging of existing street infrastructure will also save the hassle and investments needed for erecting new poles along roadside, especially in highly populated areas.

The Department of Telecom last week also notified the amended Right of Way Rules, which pave the way for deployment of 5G small cells on existing street infrastructure, and expects these reforms to enable launch of 5G services in the country by October, 2022. The amendments include rationalisation of charges, introduction of a single window clearance system and doing away with the need for consent from a government authority for installing infrastructure over private property. To facilitate faster 5G roll-out, RoW application procedures for small cells have been simplified and telecom licensees will be able to use street infrastructure to deploy telecom equipment at a cost of ₹150 a year in rural areas and ₹300 in urban areas.

J&J's talc-based powder still on sale

The company discontinued the product in the U.S. and Canada two years ago

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

India is part of the "worldwide portfolio assessment and commercial decision to transition to an all cornstarch-based baby powder portfolio" of the pharmaceutical giant Johnson and Johnson (J&J).

In its statement, the company said that as a result of this transition, talc-based Johnson's baby powder would be discontinued globally in 2023.

The announcement earlier this month comes two years after J&J discontinued the product in the U.S. and Canada.

Child rights groups, parents and doctors have been questioning the continued availability of the product here in India. Indian drug regulators have been silent on this issue, allowing wide availability and sale of this product in the country.

The company has said that "In India there is no plan to withdraw this talc and that there will be no recall. The product is safe and will be available till manufacturing stops."

It reiterated that it continuously evaluates and optimises its portfolio to best position the business for long-term growth.

"This transition will help simplify our product offerings, deliver sustainable innovation, and meet the needs of our consumers, customers and evolving global trends," it maintained while admitting that the cornstarch-based Johnson's Baby Powder was already sold in countries around the world.

Not off the shelves: J&J has said that in India there is no plan to withdraw this talc. • REPRESENTATIONAL PHOTO

Concerns over asbestos

The company's decision to stop production comes following multiple lawsuits from women who claim that the product caused ovarian cancer, due to the alleged contamination of asbestos, a known carcinogen.

It, however, has maintained that its older product (which is not cornstarch-based) is safe.

"Our position on the safety of our cosmetic talc remains unchanged. We stand firmly behind the decades of independent scientific analysis by medical experts around the world that confirms that talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder is safe, does not contain asbestos, and does not cause cancer," the company said in its statement.

"In India, the company is late in implementing the strategy, which has been adapted in the western part of the world. If a product is being discontinued for manufacturing, why should it be sold and why not recall it," asked Suresh Kumar Panuganti, lead consultant, paediatric critical care, Yashoda Hospitals, Hyderabad.

For decades now, doctors have advised parents not to use talcum powder on babies, even if it does not contain asbestos, cautioning that inhaling the talc can lead to respiratory illnesses.

Syed Mustafa Hasan, director and senior consultant, paediatrics and neonatology, Aakash Healthcare, pointed out, "We already know the harmful effects of asbestos, which has been found in their talc-based baby powder, on respiratory health."

"When talc is contaminated with asbestos, it is more likely to contain highly carcinogenic tremolite or anthophyllite. They are considered more carcinogenic than chrysotile, the most-used type of asbestos. Prolonged breathing of asbestos increases the risk of multiple cancers, including lung and colon cancer. Infants and children below the age of five are five times more likely to get affected than a 30-year-old adult to develop mesothelioma, a type of cancer linked to asbestos if they are exposed to it at the same time. This is because a child's organs are more tender than an adult's. Talcum powders are harmful for both the mother and baby," he said.

The National Commission of Protection for Child Rights had raised questions with the drug regulator over the lack of uniformity in the testing methods for detecting the presence of formaldehyde and asbestos in J&J's baby shampoo and talcum powder.

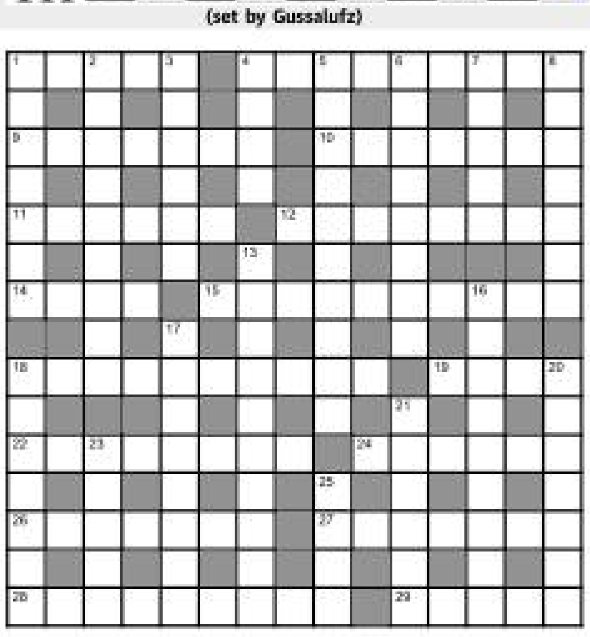
A final decision is pending, noted a senior Health Ministry official.

TH CROSSWORD + 13647

(set by Gussalufz)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN



Across

1 Dictator gets award for style (5)
4 Break – in theory – for European Commission in a month (9)
9 Died horribly after consuming off-limits toxic compound (7)
10 Anthem in American industrial city: Not Dead, Drug-Free (7)
11 Quietly substituted more brusque hotel employee? (6)
12 Malt liquor that is almost alcohol-free and frequently free – new bar/tavern's revolution! (4,4)
14 Buy cycles for short journeys (4)
15 Snug orange pants? Mortified! (10)
18 Exercising session can lead to higher achievements (10)
19 Shouted, "Run away! Blood-sucking insect!" (4)
22 Adjust to a new life in Rome's outskirts after leaving a Washington city (8)
24 After getting corrected, men are more unkind (6)
26 Screen activity (7)
27 "Game point!?" (Loses courage) (7)
28 Musicians and comics exchanging one-to-one letters (9)
29 Hollow males high over heroin – they are said to be attention-seeking (5)

Down

1 Shrink division in popular hospital getting full! (2-5)
2 Is upcoming Portuguese city one roughly growing equally in every direction? (9)
3 Field in which electron bumps one over (6)
4 Comedy, editorially trimmed at the edges and made more colourful (4)
5 Arms crushed in SUV, legs spread across the top of wheel (6-4)
6 Restaurants in Spain had their videos shown every now and then (8)
7 Liquor that is second-rate, slimy stuff (5)
8 About to get joint with pot, old Bob comes back (7)
13 Blows hot and cold and makes empty boasts – sick! (10)
16 God will send aging men lacking clothes this machine (3,6)
17 King spoiled a winter woollen garment? (8)
18 Poor sap potters about (7)
20 Hair dryer set is regularly used for nails (7)
21 Crab, perhaps unable to run? (6)
23 Intrepid ticket scalper pursuing seats in front (5)
25 "Like the present, sis?" Answer coming up... (2,2)

SUDOKU

5		3						
		1			2		4	3
				6		1	7	
7				8	1			6
8								7
2			9	7				4
	6	7		3				
1	8		2			6		
						7		8

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13646

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	7	6	9	8	1	2	5	4
8	2	9	7	5	4	1	6	3
4	1	5	3	6	2	9	8	7
2	3	7	5	1	9	8	4	6
5	4	1	6	2	8	7	3	9
9	6	8	4	7	3	5	2	1
1	9	4	8	3	5	6	7	2
7	8	2	1	4	6	3	9	5
6	5	3	2	9	7	4	1	8

FAITH

Love for the Supreme One

Whenever the Azhvars thought of the exploits of Lord Narayana during His various avatars, it did not seem to them as if these events had happened a long time ago. It seemed as if they were happening in their time. So great was their love for the Lord, that every time they thought of the dangers the Lord had faced in an avatara of His, they shuddered. They were like a mother in this attitude towards the Lord, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan, in a discourse.

Suppose a small child shakes off its mother's hand, and runs to the middle of the road, with a car speeding towards it, imagine the mother's horror. She is afraid she may not be able to save the child. Luckily, the driver of the car applies the brakes in time and no harm comes to the child. But every time the mother thinks of this incident, the fear comes back to her, as if the whole scene is being repeated.

This was how the Azhvars felt when they thought of the hurdles in the Lord's path. Kulasekhara Azhvar showed his concern for Rama. Periyazhvar had maternal concern for Krishna. Periyazhvar imagined himself to be Yasoda, bathing Krishna, feeding the child, and watching its growing years in delight. Krishna is referred to as the One in the middle – Idaiyan. The Supreme One gave to Himself the task of protecting and in this role He positioned Himself as Vishnu, between Brahma the creator and Siva the destroyer. Parasara Bhatta in his Sri Rangaraja Stava, refers to Vishnu, the middle One, as His first avatara. Although the Lord thus assumed a position of His choice, His Paratva is not hidden, points out Bhatta. Just as Vishnu is the protector, the Supreme One, in His avatara as Krishna, was in the midst of cowherds, who are also protectors. They protect, and nurture cows, which give us nourishing milk.

Imran vows more rallies against rivals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that his political rallies against his rivals will continue even when the crisis-hit country is severely affected by devastating floods as his fight was for 'haqeeqi azadi' (real freedom).

Speaking at a rally in Jhelum district of the most populous Punjab province, Mr. Khan, 69, on Saturday said that he is waging war against the "thieves" who looted Pakistan for 30 years and also fighting for the supremacy of the law, the *Dawn* newspaper reported on Sunday.

Mr. Khan denied that he was indulging in politics at the time of the tragedy and instead called it a "fight for haqeeqi azadi".

U.S. warships sail through Taiwan Strait

The cruisers transited through a corridor that is beyond the territorial sea of any coastal state: U.S. Navy

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TAIPEI

Two U.S. Navy warships sailed through international waters in the Taiwan Strait on Sunday, the first such operation since a visit to Taiwan by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi enraged China which regards the island as its territory.

The U.S. Navy said cruisers *USS Chancellorsville* and *USS Antietam* were carrying out the ongoing operation. Such operations usually take eight to 12 hours to complete and are closely monitored by China's military.

In recent years U.S. warships, and on occasion those from allied nations such as Britain and Canada, have routinely sailed through the strait, drawing the ire of China which claims Taiwan against the objections of its democratically elected government.

In action: *USS Antietam* sailing through international waters in the Taiwan Strait on Sunday • REUTERS/U.S. NAVY

Ms. Pelosi's Taiwan trip in early August infuriated China which saw it as a U.S. attempt to interfere in its internal affairs. China subsequently launched military drills near the island which have since continued.

"These (U.S.) ships transited through a corridor in the strait that is beyond the territorial sea of any coastal state," the U.S. Navy said.

U.S. commitments

The operation demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, and the U.S. military flies, sails and operates anywhere international law allows, the Navy said.

Taiwan's Defence Ministry said the ships were sailing in a southerly direction and that its forces were observing but that "the situation was as normal".

The narrow Taiwan Strait has been a frequent source of military tension since the defeated Republic of China government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with the communists, who established the People's Republic of China.

Ms. Pelosi's visit to Taiwan was followed around a week later by a group of five other U.S. lawmakers, with China's military responding by carrying out more exercises near the island.

Senator Marsha Blackburn, a U.S. lawmaker on the Senate Commerce and Armed Services committees, arrived in Taiwan on Thursday on the third visit by a U.S. dignitary this month, defying pressure from China to halt the trips.

The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden has sought to keep tension between Washington and Beijing from boiling over into conflict, reiterating that congressional trips are routine.

The United States has no formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan but is bound by law to provide the island with the means to defend itself.

China has never ruled out using force to bring Taiwan under its control.

Taiwan says the People's Republic of China has never ruled the island and so has no claim to it, and that only Taiwan's 23 million people can decide their future.

Devastating deluge: A man trying to salvage his belongings after flood destroyed his home in Jaffarabad on Sunday. • AP

Pak. seeks aid as floods claim over 1,000 lives

Expects $1.2 bn as part of bailout package

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan needs financial help to deal with "overwhelming" floods, its Foreign Minister said on Sunday, adding that he hoped financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund would take the economic fallout into account.

Unusually heavy monsoon rains have caused devastating floods in both the north and south of the country, affecting more than 30 million people and killing more than 1,000.

"I haven't seen destruction of this scale, I find it very difficult to put into words... it is overwhelming," said Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari in an interview with Reuters, adding many crops that provided much of the population's livelihoods had been wiped out.

"Obviously this will have an effect on the overall economic situation," he said.

The South Asian nation was already in an economic crisis, facing high inflation, a depreciating currency and a current account deficit.

The IMF board will decide this week on whether to release $1.2 billion as part of the seventh and eighth tranches of Pakistan's bailout programme, which it entered in 2019.

Mr. Bhutto-Zardari said the board was expected to approve the release given an agreement between Pakistani officials and IMF staff had already been reached and he hoped in coming months the IMF would recognise the impact of the floods.

Floods triggered by the torrential rain since June 14 have wreaked havoc, inundating a vast swathe of flat land in the south and southwest of the country.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said on Sunday that 119 people had died in the previous 24 hours as heavy rains continued to lash parts of the country.

Floods have destroyed 3,451.5 km of road, swept away 147 bridges, destroyed 170 shops, and partially or fully damaged about 9,49,858 houses.

Meanwhile, police on Sunday booked over 100 people under terrorism charges in Sindh province as they allegedly attacked police personnel, pelted stones and damaged public properties during a visit by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Mr. Bhutto-Zardari to a flood-hit area on Friday.

(With PTI inputs)

Pak. is letting U.S. drones use its airspace: Taliban

No role in Zawahiri's killing: Islamabad

REUTERS
KABUL

The Taliban's Acting Defence Minister on Sunday said Pakistan had allowed American drones to use its airspace to access Afghanistan, a charge Pakistan has recently denied following a U.S. airstrike in Kabul.

Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob told reporters at a news conference in Kabul that American drones have been entering Afghanistan via Pakistan.

"According to our information the drones are entering through Pakistan to Afghanistan, they use Pakistan's airspace, we ask Pakistan, don't use your airspace against us," he said.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Pakistani authorities have denied involvement in or advanced knowledge of a drone strike the U.S. said it carried out in Kabul in July that killed al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Mr. Yaqoob's comments could exacerbate tension between the neighbouring nations at a time when the Afghan Taliban is mediating talks between Pakistan and a Pakistani Taliban militant group.

The Taliban said it is investigating the July air strike and that it has not found the al-Qaeda leader's body.

Uneasy calm after Libya clashes kill 32

The worst fighting since a 2020 ceasefire, many hospitals and buildings damaged

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TRIPOLI

Flights resumed and shops re-opened in Libya's capital Tripoli on Sunday after clashes between backers of rival governments killed at least 32 people and sparked fears of major new conflict.

Armed groups had exchanged fire that damaged several hospitals and set buildings on fire starting Friday evening, the worst fighting in the Libyan capital since a landmark 2020 ceasefire.

A cautious calm had set in by late Saturday. The Health Ministry said on Sunday morning that 32 people had been killed and 159 wounded during the clashes.

Damage assessment: People looking at a building on Sunday following clashes between two groups in Tripoli. • REUTERS

The fighting came after months of mounting tensions between backers of Abdulhamid Dbeibah and Fathi Bashagha, whose rival administrations are vying for control of the North African country, which has seen more than a decade of violence since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising.

Mr. Dbeibah's administration, installed in the capital as part of a United Nations-led peace process last year, has so far prevented Mr. Bashagha from taking office there, arguing that the next administration should be the product of elections.

Mr. Bashagha is backed by Libya's eastern-based Parliament and the powerful eastern military chief Khalifa Haftar, whose 2019 attempt to seize the capital by force turned into a year-long civil war.

Mr. Bashagha, a former Interior Minister, had initially ruled out the use of violence to take power in Tripoli but subsequently hinted that he could resort to force.

Libya plunged into chaos following the 2011 killing of dictator Moamer Kadhafi in the uprising, with myriad armed groups and foreign powers moving to fill the power vacuum.

NASA moon rocket set for launch today

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CAPE CANAVERAL

NASA's new moon rocket remained on track to blast off on a crucial test flight on Monday, despite a series of lightning strikes at the launch pad.

The 98-metre Space Launch System rocket is the most powerful ever built by NASA. It's poised to send an empty crew capsule into lunar orbit, a half-century after NASA's Apollo programme, which landed 12 astronauts on the moon.

Astronauts could return to the moon in a few years, if this six-week test flight goes well.

FB to settle Cambridge Analytica suit

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Facebook has reached a preliminary agreement in a lawsuit seeking damages from the social network for allowing third parties, including Cambridge Analytica, to access users' data.

According to a court filing, the firm said it is submitting a draft "agreement in principle" and has requested a stay of proceedings for 60 days.

The lawsuit, initiated in 2018, alleges that Facebook violated privacy rules by sharing their data with Cambridge Analytica, which was linked to Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.

Cities near Ukrainian nuclear plant shelled

Operator warns of radioactive leak

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SLOVYANSK

Russian rocket and artillery strikes hit areas across the Dnieper river from Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Ukrainian officials said on Sunday, even as Russia's Defence Ministry claimed that Kyiv forces shelled the facility twice in the past 24 hours.

Russian forces took control of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant soon after the war began and hold adjacent territory along the left bank of the wide river. Ukraine controls the right bank, including the cities of Nikopol and Marhanets, each of them about 10 km from the plant.

Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said on Sunday that Ukrainian forces had shelled the plant twice over the past day and that some shells fell near buildings storing reactor fuel and radioactive waste.

Homes damaged

Heavy firing during the night left parts of Nikopol without electricity, said Valentyn Reznichenko, Governor of the Dnipropetrovsk region.

The city of Zaporizhzhia, about 40 km upriver from the nuclear plant, also came under fire during the night, wounding two people, city council member Anatoliy Kurtev said.

Downriver from the nuclear plant, the Kakhovka hydroelectric plant and the city adjacent to it were hit by Ukrainian rockets three times on Sunday, said Vladimir Leontyev, the head of the Russia-installed local administration.

In eastern Ukraine, where Russian and separatist forces are trying to take control, shelling hit the large and strategically significant cities of Kramatorsk and Slovyansk, but no casualties were reported, said Pavlo Kyrylenko, Governor of the Donetsk region.

Periodic shelling has damaged the power station's infrastructure, Ukraine's nuclear power operator, Energoatom, said.

"There are risks of hydrogen leakage and sputtering of radioactive substances, and the fire hazard is high," it said.

Authorities last week began distributing iodine tablets to residents who live near the Zaporizhzhia plant in case of radiation exposure.

Kuwait calls Sept. polls amid political feud

KUWAIT CITY

The Kuwaiti government on Sunday called a legislative election for September 29, the state news agency said, two months after Parliament was dissolved amid simmering political tensions. Kuwait is the only Gulf state with a fully elected legislature. AFP

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
ELECTRICAL (TRD) BRANCH, TIRUCHCHIRAPPALLI DIVISION
TENDER NOTICE
For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager, Traction Distribution, Southern Railway, Tiruchchirappalli - 620001 invites online E-tenders from prospective tenderers / bidders for the following work.
1) Tender Number : TPJ-TRD-2022-2023-06; 2) Name of work : TPJ Divn. - Upgradation of Existing Pit line - 1 for the maintenance of Chair Car Vande Bharat Train set at CCC TPJ Electrical Traction Arrangements;
3) Approx. value of tender : ₹ 54,54,151.00; 4) Cost of tender booklet : Nil; 5) Bid Security : ₹ 1,09,100/-; 6) Date & Time of Bidding: 07.09.2022 to 15:00 Hours on 21.09.2022; 7) Date & Time of Tender Opening: After 15:00 Hours on 21.09.2022; 8) Period of Completion: Six Months; 9) Period of validity of offer : 81 days from the date of tender opening.
NOTE : 1) The prospective tenderers/bidders are requested to register themselves with IREPS (Indian Railway Electronic Procurement System), if not done already, for participating in E-Tenders. Registration form is available on IREPS site (Quick link New Vendors/Contractors (E-Tender).
2) Contractors/Bidders are requested to procure Digital Signing Certificate (DSC) Class III or appropriate from Govt. of India, authorized Certifying authority (CCA-Controller of Certifying Authority) for participating in E-Tender & to log into IREPS.
3) Payment of Bid Security in respect of e-tendering, should be done through net banking or payment gateway only (online payment) or in the form of BG as per GCC 2022. Tenders received without Bid Security shall be rejected.
4) Kindly log on to http://www.ireps.gov.in for complete details, terms and conditions of the above tender and details of bid submission and the online bids are required to be digitally signed. The tenderers are advised to refer to the documents uploaded.
5) All Addendum/Corrigendum, Time extension, clarifications, etc. will be uploaded on or before 07.09.2022, in the website only and will not be published separately in Newspapers. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.
6) Tenderers need not be present in the office for tender opening as they can watch the status of opened tenders, online through IREPS.
DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER, Electrical Traction Distribution, Tiruchchirappalli - 620 001
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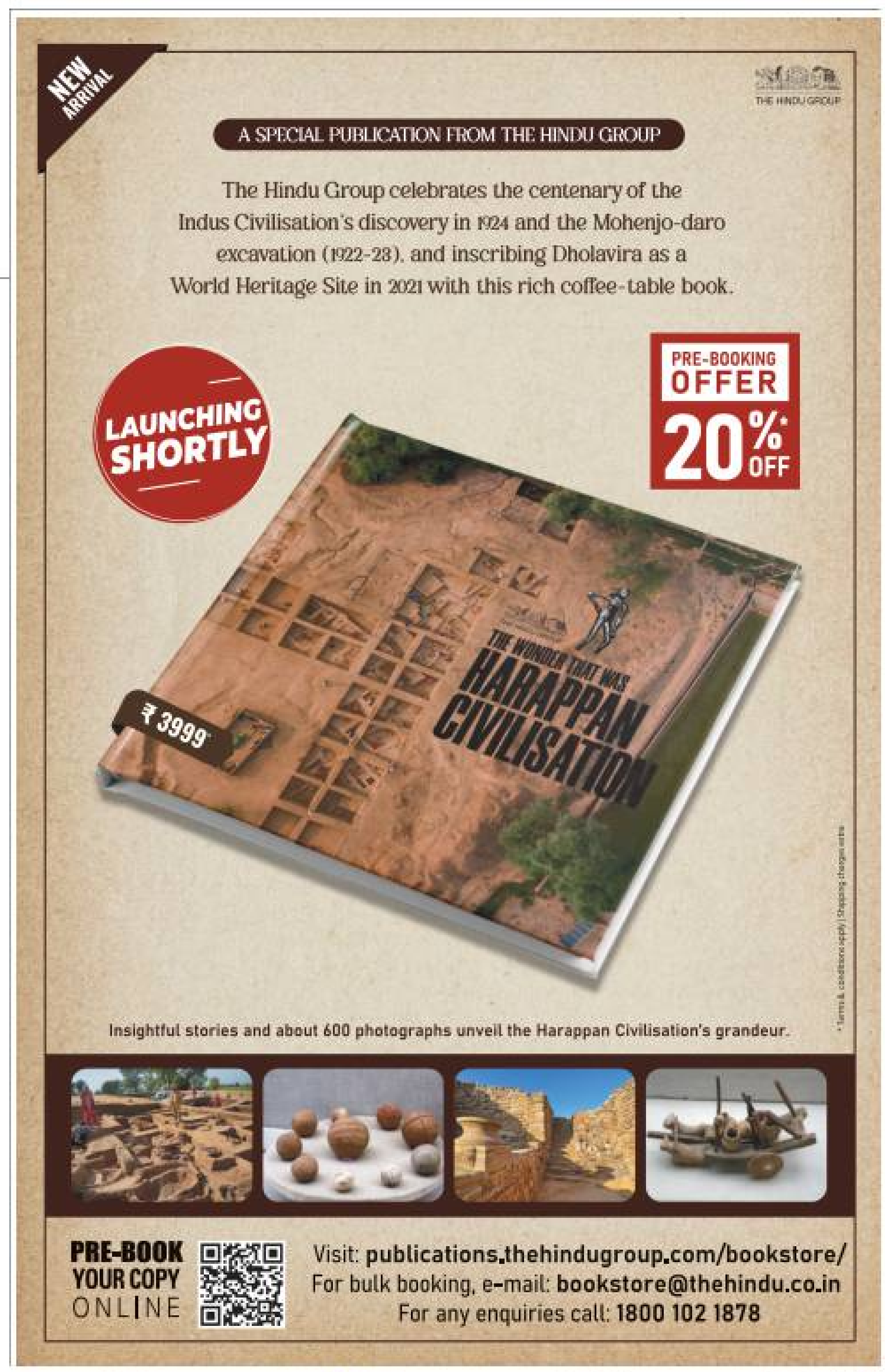
TAMIL NADU INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
3rd floor, CMDA Building Tower-II, Thalamuthu-Natarajan Maaligai, No. 1, Gandhi Irwin Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008
Phone: 044-2855 0155 / 255 / 355 / 455;
E-mail: ceoinfra.fmdpt@tn.gov.in Website: www.tenders.tn.gov.in
INVITATION FOR PROPOSAL
SELECTION OF AGENCY FOR IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING POLICY FOR FINANCE DEPARTMENT STAFF
1. The Chief Executive Officer, Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Development Board invites proposal from consultants to Selection of Agency for Identification of Training Needs And Development of Training Policy For Finance Department Staff
2. Request for Proposal (RfP) may be downloaded from the website www.tenders.tn.gov.in or may be obtained from the office of the CEO, TNIDB. Such downloaded tender document shall be accompanied by Bid Security (EMD) of Rs. 1,00,000/-.
3. A pre-bid meeting for the prospective applicants is scheduled on 07.09.2022 at 15:00 Hours.
4. Proposals complete in all respect must be delivered in the office of Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Development Board (TNIDB), 3rd floor, CMDA Building Tower-II 'Thalamuthu-Natarajan Maaligai', No. 1, Gandhi Irwin Road, Egmore, Chennai-600008 on or before 15.00 Hours on 29.09.2022.
5. All other details are available in the Request for Proposal (RfP).
Chief Executive Officer TNIDB
DIPR/3928/Tender/2022



ASK US

VIDYA BALA

Q. I am asking this on behalf of my retired parents. What would be the ways to invest in a pension fund ? Please mention any schemes where we can get returns higher than 10%? Also please mention any SWP schemes where we can invest.

JOMS MATHEW

A. We're assuming that you are looking at various means to getting regular income and not just a pension fund. For retired people, income streams such as Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme, LIC's Vaya Vandhana Yojana (Both ₹15 lakh is limit per head per scheme) and RBI's Floating Rate Savings Bond 2020 (no limit on investment) all offer over 7%. Please remember that any option that gives way higher than a bank FD cannot be without risks or will be unregulated. If you need returns in excess of 10%, no annuity products will give that. There will be privately-placed bonds that generate such returns but carry very high risks and require high corpus deployment. They are risky especially if the corpus is meant to be preserved and the capital needs to generate income.

Q. I am a salaried employee aged 27, and I earn ₹1,15,000 per month. I do not have any loan. I am planning to start investments and savings for my retirement. At the age of 45 and 48 I would like to plan my children's education. At the age of 60, I would like to retire with a corpus of ₹12 crore to ₹15 crore. I have shortlisted SIP, NPS, and PPF. Could you please suggest how to and how much to invest in them? I would also like to include an inflation rate of 6%.

VIVEK G. RAVINDRANATH

A. First, congratulations on being an early mover in planning and investing for the long term. You have stated how much you would need for retirement. You have not stated what is your ballpark requirement for education. For now, we will assume ₹15 lakh each for the 2 goals at the age of 45 and 48. We assume a 6% inflation for this, but take it that the ₹12-15 crore you need for retirement is already adjusted for inflation.

At a return of 10% (IRR) for the retirement goal, you will need to invest ₹40,000-50,000 per month to achieve ₹12-15 crore, 33 years from now. Given the long-time frame, it is better to temper return expectation. For education you will need about ₹7,000 each for the two goals, totalling ₹14,000 per month. You need not worry too much about this high saving. You can start off low for retirement and up it later when income rises.

If you wish to have low maintenance, it is best to go with index funds such as Nifty, Nifty 500, Nifty Midcap 150 and any U.S.-based passive fund for your equity exposure. Keep midcap exposure to a maximum of 15-20%. You can use NPS for your debt allocation — with a combination of both Gilt and Corporate bond. PPF is also fine but not a must, based on your tax needs. Debt NPS and PPF can be a minimum of 20-30% for your goals and can be marginally higher if your risk appetite is low. Consider about 5-10% in gold funds if you would like some exposure to it to hedge against equity.

Q. I am a 26-year-old Air Force employee with gross income of ₹60,000 a month. I have about ₹12 lakh in PF account with an addition of ₹20,000 monthly; an RD of ₹5,000 for 5 years maturing in October 2022; an SIP of ₹5,000 whose present value is ₹3.5 lakh. I have future commitment towards my own wedding within two years and I want to build a house (on my own land)/take a flat in a good society. I also want to build a corpus of ₹20 lakh. Please advise for these short-term and long-term plans.

HIMANSHU SHARMA

A. We do not know what you wish to spend towards your marriage. But save up your RD and present SIPs for the same. For the ₹20 lakh corpus that you have mentioned, we assume you can give up to 5 years of time since you will be spending for your wedding as well in 2 years. Assuming a conservative 11% return (IRR) over 5 years, you will need about ₹25,000 per month to meet this corpus. You can use mutual funds with a 60-70% allocation to equity and rest in debt. If you are short of savings, reduce your PF contribution and increase in mutual funds, since your corpus requirement is high.

Q. I am a 22-year-old graduate. Since I am unemployed, I want to make judicious use of my saved money — ₹3,000. Very often I feel the fund crunch since I'm appearing for job-related exams. How can I go about it? How I can make it grow? Also, what can be a possible way to earn money which will go well along with my preparation?

VAISHNAVI

A. We have to assume ₹3,000 is your monthly savings. If it is a lump sum, it is not meaningful enough to save. It is best parked in your savings account or in a liquid/ultra-short-term debt fund if you want to avoid spending it. There are no shortcuts to growing money even though you might get such an impression from social media influencers. The most judicious thing to do would be to cut down on impulse spending and postpone any other short-term goals you may have. I would not recommend 'earning' money by trading in the stock markets etc. At this juncture, it is a distraction that you can well avoid and instead focus on your interviews. You may also lose money when you dabble as a novice in stock markets. Look for a part-time job if you think you have the time; there are many freelance/work-from-home options these days. Check them out in sites that allow you to register as a freelancer and look for assignments. If you want to save for the short term, invest in ultra-short term debt mutual funds. This way, it will earn some sum and allow you to take out money whenever you want. If you are thinking long term (like 5 years and above), you can consider equity index funds like Nifty index funds.

(The adviser is Co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)

Readers can e-mail queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. The experts on personal finance will answer select queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

The key to making home loan prepayments

Although reducing the tenure may ensure greater savings, slashing the EMI amount will help raise the overall proportion of disposable income

RATAN CHAUDHARY

Large loan amounts and long repayment tenures that extend up to 30 years make home loans one of the biggest financial commitments for any applicant. These factors also lead the interest cost on home loans to exceed the principal amount in most cases. Hence, many home loan borrowers tend to reduce their overall interest costs by making partial prepayments during the loan repayment tenure. Given that most lenders provide home loans at floating interest rates, existing borrowers are not charged any prepayment penalties if they make partial or full repayments on their home loans.

Home loan borrowers looking to reduce their debt burden by prepaying their existing home loan, either fully or partially, should keep the following points in mind before opting for home loan prepayments:

EMI or loan tenure

Existing home loan borrowers opting for prepayments are faced with two options – either minimise the EMI component of their loan or bring down their loan tenure. Although borrowers can make greater savings in their overall interest costs by reducing their loan tenure, reducing the EMI amount will increase the overall proportion of disposable income for borrowers.

Hence, the decision to select either option will primarily depend on whether the borrower wants to reduce the overall interest cost or reduce EMI burden with the aim of undertaking any future investments and expenditures.

Home loan borrowers can deposit their surplus funds in an overdraft account, from which they can withdraw in part or full in case of future requirements

Balance transfer

Home loan balance transfer (HLBT) facility allows existing borrowers to transfer their ongoing home loan to a different lender at lower interest rates and/or more favourable terms and conditions.

This facility is especially useful for borrowers with improved credit profiles who can take advantage of a declining interest rate regime to avail of home loans at reduced interest rates.

Exercising the HLBT option leads to reduction in overall interest payout for a borrower without negatively affecting either their liquidity or their ongoing investments.

Home loan borrowers should account for the estimated overall savings by using the balance transfer facility before they opt for shifting their existing loan to another lender.

Existing borrowers looking to transfer their home loan to other banks or housing finance companies (HFC) can also consider the home loan overdraft option – a home loan variant – if it is offered by the new lender. Under this variant, an overdraft account is opened, in the form of savings or current account and linked with the home loan account.

Home loan borrowers can deposit their surplus funds in this overdraft account, from which they can withdraw in part or full at a later date in case of future monetary requirements or fund shortages.

The balance amount left in the overdraft account is deducted from the outstanding home loan amount while calculating the interest component. Thus, the home loan overdraft facility offers dual benefits of loan prepayment and readily available liquidity for their borrowers.

Emergency fund

Emergency funds are created to tackle financial exigencies and/or for meeting unavoidable expenses such as ongoing EMIs, rent, insurance premiums and tuition fees for children during periods of loss of income caused by unemployment, illness or disability.

Emergency funds should ideally be large enough to meet any unavoidable expenses for at least 6 months.

Home loan borrowers who use their emergency funds or sell assets for making loan prepayments may have to redeem their existing investments at suboptimal prices to deal with adverse financial situations or avail future loans at much higher interest rates.

Several home loan borrowers tend to liquidate their existing investments earmarked for crucial financial goals to make home loan prepayments.

However, doing so can adversely impact their liquidity and long-term financial health apart from forcing them to avail costlier loans in the future just to fulfil those financial obligations.

Factor in returns

Although home loan interest rates are one of the lowest among retail loan products, they usually tend to be higher than returns generated by most fixed-income instruments.

Hence, if home loan borrowers had parked their surplus funds in fixed income products like fixed deposits, short-term debt funds that are not earmarked for any crucial financial goal, they can utilise them to prepay their existing home loans. However, the same strategy may not be applicable in case of equity investments.

As long-term returns generated from equity investments are usually much higher than interest rates of home loans, one should refrain from redeeming their equity funds for making home loan prepayments.

(The writer is Head of Home Loans, Paisabazaar)

Home loan borrowers who use their emergency funds or sell assets for making loan prepayments may have to redeem their existing investments at suboptimal prices to deal with adverse financial situations or will have to avail of future loans at much higher interest rates

COVER NOTE: INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Fine-tuning financial inclusion

Mass insurance schemes, usually targeted at below-poverty-line beneficiaries, have several built-in advantages

K. NITYA KALYANI

Three mass insurance schemes were introduced in the year 2015 under the financial inclusion objectives of the Government of India meant for people from the low-income group as well as the unorganised sector.

These were a life insurance scheme called Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), an accident insurance scheme called Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and a pension scheme Atal Pension Yojana (APY). These and other insurance schemes were under the umbrella of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY).

Atal Pension Yojana, introduced as Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana, was in the news last week because from October 1, taxpayers, past or present, cannot open new accounts.

This will narrow the eligibility for the scheme to low-income individuals who were the core targets, especially from the unorganised sector, as they do not have access to other pension schemes offering guaranteed retirement pensions.

Safety net: Give gig economy workers the information, and endorse that government schemes do them good. • GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCK

To recap the profile of the scheme, individuals between 18 and 40 years of age can join the scheme that offers a monthly minimum guaranteed pension after age 60, of ₹1,000-5,000, depending on the contribution.

Administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), there was also an attractive co-contribution by the Government of India for the first five years for those who joined the scheme from June 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016. This contribution was 50% of the subscriber's own contribution up to a cap of ₹1,000 per year and was meant only for those not covered by any Statutory Social Security Schemes and who were not income taxpayers.

This was an introductory incentive for the first five years of joining the scheme.

The numbers work like this. A 25-year-old member in the scheme can contribute ₹376 per month through a linked bank account seeded with a mobile number, till age 60, and receive ₹5,000 per month pension after that through his or her lifetime.

This is a minimum guaranteed pension and if returns on the corpus invested are higher, the beneficiaries could get higher pensions.

There will also be a return of the corpus amount of ₹8.5 lakh to his or her nominee on the death of the annuitant.

It is the guaranteed nature of the pension that probably dictates the exclusion of taxpayers from the scheme now.

Subsidy element

There is a subsidy element implicit in the guarantee and it needs to reach those it is meant for and not others who can afford to support themselves. Much like some ration cards being identified for subsidised rations and the drive for voluntarily giving up cooking gas subsidy.

The exclusion of taxpayers from pension scheme does not rob them of the opportunity to provide for their old age as there are other pension schemes such as the National Pension System (NPS) and Public Provident Fund (PPF) that give higher returns or pension for higher contributions, which they can afford, and have a tax-saving element.

Mass insurance schemes, usually targeted at below-poverty-line beneficiaries, have several built-in advantages.

The coverage follows a template, thus removing any decision-making. The rates are highly beneficial due to economies of scale. Joining and making claims are easier because you pass through a system; in this case, an existing bank account with a mobile number seeded. This last element made the scheme easier because the subscribers join through their banks, which presumably knows their customers well, and premium payment is automated through periodic electronic debit.

It's a scheme that you should encourage low-income people in your circle to sign up for. Drivers, maids, housekeeping staff, electricians, plumbers and a variety of technical service providers, vendors, gig-economy workers.... give them the information and your endorsement that government schemes do them good. They have been seeing the mass health insurance schemes making a change in their lives, and this message will resonate.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance and corporate history)

PERSONAL LOAN - RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Lender	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure - 5 years	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure - 5 years	Processing fee (% of loan amount)
HDFC Bank	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to Rs. 4,999
Citibank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3%
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 2.75%
State Bank of India	10.30 -15.10	10,697-11,921	2,139-2,384	Up to 1.50% (Rs. 1,000-Rs. 15,000)
ICICI Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 2.50%
Bank of Baroda	9.70 -17.05	10,550-12,440	2,110-2,488	Up to 2% (Min Rs. 1,000 and Max Rs. 10,000)
Canara Bank	11.60-15.30	11,021-11,974	2,204-2,395	Up to 1%
Punjab National Bank	9.30-15.85	10,452-12,119	2,090-2,424	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.99-15.50	10,621-12,027	2,124-2,405	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	10.49-17.99	10,744-12,694	2,149-2,539	Up to 3%
Bajaj Finserv	13.00 onwards	11,377 onwards	2,275 onwards	Upto 4%
Punjab & Sind Bank	10.90-12.90	10,846-11,351	2,169-2,270	Up to 1%
South Indian Bank	11.25-19.00	10,934-12,970	2,187-2,594	Up to 2%
Indian Overseas Bank	11.40-12.40	10,971-11,224	2,194-2,245	Up to 0.75%
Karnataka Bank	12.90	11,351	2,270	Up to 0.25% (Min Rs. 250)

NEW CAR LOAN-RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Lender	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure-5 years	Processing fee (% of loan amount)
Union Bank of India	8.20-9.40	10,186-10,477	Rs. 1,000
Punjab National Bank	8.05-8.90	10,150-10,355	waived off till 30.09.2022
Bank of Baroda	8.20-11.50	10,186-10,996	0.50% (Rs 2,500-Rs. 10,000)
Canara Bank	8.30-11.00	10,210-10,871	0.25% (Rs. 1,000-Rs. 5,000)
Bank of India	8.25-9.95	10,198-10,611	NIL
UCO Bank	8.05	10,150	1% (Upto Rs. 1,500)
State Bank of India	7.75-8.65	10,078-10,294	NIL
IDBI Bank	8.60-9.90	10,282-10,599	Rs. 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.20-11.70	10,186-11,047	0.25% (Rs. 1,000-Rs. 15,000)
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.95	10,367	0.5% - 0.6% (Rs. 500-Rs. 10,000)
ICICI Bank	8.10 onwards	10,162 onwards	Rs. 5,500-Rs. 8,500
HDFC Bank	7.95-8.30	10,126-10,210	0.5% (Rs 3,500-Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	8.41-10.46	10,237-10,737	Up to 0.6% (Max. Rs. 11,000)
Punjab and Sind Bank***	8.20-9.30	10,186-10,452	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 1,000-Rs. 15,000)
Federal Bank	9.90	10,599	Rs. 2,000 - Rs. 4,500
Axis Bank	8.20-11.40	10,186-10,971	Rs. 3,500-Rs. 5,500
South Indian Bank	10.55-12.00	10,759-11,122	1% (Max. Rs. 10,000)
Karur Vysya Bank	8.00-8.30	10,138-10,210	Rs. 3,000- Rs. 7500
Indian Bank	8.25-11.40	10,198-10,971	0.50% (max. Rs. 10,000)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holder. 0.05% concession on interest rate to women & armed forces personnel subject to minimum floor ceiling of RLLR.

**0.50% Special Interest Concession to Borrowers with CIC Score of 800 and above, 0.20% To borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers

***0.10% interest rate concession to women car owners having contribution in EMI, subject to minimum ROI.

Rates and charges as on Aug. 24

Source: Paisabazaar.com

All-round Hardik guides the Men in Blue home in thrilling finish

Chasing a target of 148, his 17-ball unbeaten 33 helps India cross the finish line with two balls to spare; Jadeja chips in with a crucial 35; Bhuvneshwar scalps four

Packing a punch: After taking three wickets, Hardik returned to swing the game India's way. • PTI

ASIA CUP

ASHWIN ACHAL
DUBAI

Hardik Pandya (33 n.o., 17b, 4x4x, 1x6) and Ravindra Jadeja (35, 29b, 2x4, 2x6) kept their cool under pressure to guide India to a five-wicket win over Pakistan in the Asia Cup at Dubai International Stadium here on Sunday.

The duo got together at 89 for four, with India chasing 148. Pakistan was on top at this stage, but the all-rounders hung around to chip away at the total. With seven needed off the last over, Jadeja lost his stumps to left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz. It took a mighty six from Hardik to finish the job.

Virat Kohli's milestone 100th T20I nearly ended in disaster, when he slashed at a full ball from Naseem Shah. Fakhar Zaman, at second slip, was a tad slow to react, and put down a tough chance. Kohli moved to 35, before a moment of indecision brought his downfall. He danced down the track to Nawaz, but failed to get to the pitch of the ball and chipped it to long-off.

Skipper Rohit Sharma looked out of sorts in his short stay at the crease. A frustrated Rohit tried to hit his way into some rhythm, but could only sky it to the fielder.

Fellow opener K.L. Rahul (0), not for the first time, got an inside edge onto his stumps.

Faced with a stiff equation, Suryakumar Kumar (18, 18b, 1x4) went for a big one. Naseem was up to the task, keeping it straight to castle Suryakumar.

After winning the crucial toss, Rohit was quick to put Pakistan in to bat. The Indian pacers resorted to a barrage of short-pitched deliveries, which accounted for the first five wickets. Skipper and form batter Babar Azam was taken out in the third over, his hook off Bhuvneshwar Kumar popping to short fine-leg.

Zaman chose to walk after getting a faint nick, even if the Indians were hesitant to appeal.

Iftikhar Ahmed's rushed hook was taken cleanly by wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik, giving Hardik first wicket.

Opener Mohammad Rizwan struggled to get going in his 42-ball 43. An awkward ramp shot off Hardik ended his stint.

Khushdil Shah failed to learn from the mistakes made by his teammates, going for a cut off yet another short ball from Hardik. He was late on the shot, slashing it to Ravindra Jadeja at sweeper cover.

Pakistan found itself in a hole at 97 for five.

Bhuvneshwar ensured no escape, coming into the attack to send back the last recognised pair of Shadab Khan and Asif Ali. Last man Shahnawaz Dahani struck a couple of sixes to give the Pakistan fans something to cheer about.

India erred with a terribly slow over rate, which resulted in a penalty of bringing in an extra fielder into the circle for the last three overs. Pakistan, in survival mode at this point, failed to capitalise. On another occasion, this lethargy in keeping time could have cost the Indians dear.

Pakistan was not any better, similarly falling three overs short of the time limit.

In a surprise move, India chose to leave out Rishabh Pant out of the eleven.

Dinesh Karthik was picked as the wicketkeeper-batter instead, perhaps a result of his recent evolution as a clinical finisher.

SCOREBOARD

PAKISTAN

Mohammad Rizwan c Avesh b Hardik 43 *(42b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Babar Azam c Arshdeep b Bhuvneshwar 10 *(9b, 2x4)*, Fakhar Zaman c Karthik b Avesh 10 *(6b, 2x4)*, Iftikhar Ahmed c Karthik b Hardik 28 *(22b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Khushdil Shah c Jadeja b Hardik 2 *(7b)*, Shadab Khan lbw b Bhuvneshwar 10 *(9b, 1x4)*, Asif Ali c Suryakumar b Bhuvneshwar 9 *(7b)*, Mohammad Nawaz c Karthik b Arshdeep 1 *(3b)*, Haris Rauf (not out) 13 *(7b, 2x4)*, Naseem Shah lbw b Bhuvneshwar 0 *(1b)*, Shahnawaz Dahani b Arshdeep 16 *(6b, 2x6)*; Extras (b-1, w-4): 5; Total (in 19.5 overs): 147.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-15 (Babar, 2.4 overs), 2-42 (Zaman, 5.5), 3-87 (Iftikhar, 12.1), 4-96 (Rizwan, 14.1), 5-97 (Khushdil, 14.3), 6-112 (Asif, 16.3), 7-114 (Nawaz, 17.1), 8-128 (Shadab, 18.2), 9-128 (Naseem, 18.3).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 4-0-26-4, Arshdeep 3.5-0-33-2, Hardik 4-0-25-3, Avesh 2-0-19-1, Chahal 4-0-32-0, Jadeja 2-0-11-0.

INDIA

Rohit Sharma c Iftikhar b Nawaz 12 *(18b, 1x6)*, K.L. Rahul b Naseem 0 *(1b)*, Virat Kohli c Iftikhar b Nawaz 35 *(34b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja b Nawaz 35 *(29b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Suryakumar Yadav b Naseem 18 *(18b, 1x4)*, Hardik Pandya (not out) 33 *(17b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Dinesh Karthi (not out) 1 *(1b)*, Extras (lb-5, w-9): 14; Total (for five wkts. in 19.4 overs): 148.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-1 (Rahul, 0.2), 2-50 (Rohit, 7.6), 3-53 (Kohli, 9.1), 4-89 (Suryakumar, 14.2), 5-141 (Jadeja, 19.1).

PAKISTAN BOWLING

Naseem 4-0-27-2, Dahani 4-0-29-0, Rauf 4-0-35-0, Shadab 4-0-19-0, Nawaz 3.4-0-33-3.

Toss: India.

MoM: Hardik.

India won by five wickets with two balls to spare.

Reaping it rich: Bhuvneshwar's spell of four for 26 was largely instrumental in putting the skids on Pakistan's innings. • AP

Hardik has been brilliant, says Rohit

SPORTS REPORTER
DUBAI

Rohit Sharma hailed his team's all-round performance after India beat Pakistan by five wickets to get its Asia Cup 2022 campaign off to a winning start at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday.

Hardik Pandya took three for 25 before seeing the team home with an unbeaten 33 off 17. Rohit lavished praise on Hardik.

"Since Hardik's comeback into the team, he's been brilliant. He had a great IPL too. His batting qualities we all know... he has been brilliant with the bat since he came into the team," said Rohit at the post-match presentation.

"Halfway through the innings, we still believed," Rohit said. "That's the kind of belief we want to have in this group, where you're not in the game and you still manage to pull it off. I'll take wins like this over one-sided ones."

Raising hopes, but...

Kohli's 100th T20I a mixed bag

SPORTS REPORTER
DUBAI

Virat Kohli flattered to deceive in his 100th T20I at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium here on Sunday. Kohli played a couple of majestic pulls to raise hopes of a big score, but eventually fell tamely for a 34-ball 35.

On the prowl

He gave his fans in the crowd a few highs when fielding, pulling off some fine saves on the boundary line.

Fan frenzy like no other contest!

Build-up is colourful; tempers, passions overflow occasionally

AYAN ACHARYA
DUBAI

The toss was scheduled for 5.30 p.m. local time and the first ball for 6 p.m.

In Dubai, the mercury has been touching over 40°C for a while. Today's reading, though, said 38°C at 2 p.m.; it feels like 50. But the scorching sun does not deter fans from turning up hours prior to the toss.

India is taking on Pakistan for the second time in Dubai in less than a year. It was here in October last year that Shaheen Shah Afridi's opening "spell from hell" condemned India to a 10-wicket defeat in the T20 World Cup.

Not just another game

Captains Rohit Sharma and Babar Azam may appear reasonable and tranquil at their press conferences, treating this as "any other match". But try explaining that to the fans, and you'll realise why India facing Pakistan in any part of the world is anything but just another match.

There are temporary road closures and traffic diversions within a two-mile radius.

It has peeved a local resident, who now has to take a longer route to his house. "Why are they queuing up this early?" he asks. "When live scores are available online and match updates come in real-time, it doesn't make sense."

His voice is drowned by chants of "*Jeeve, Jeeve* Pakistan" and "*Bharat Mata ki Jai*".

He drives away even as hundreds of raucous fans jauntily trumpet their way to the various entry points that have been opened early to "better manage the maddening inflow".

A Pakistan fan, Khaleed Hussain, sums up the mood: "But this is what genuine India and Pakistan fans are about. They don't want trouble; they are here to support their teams and the players the best way they can."

Atif, an engineering student from Kerala, spent all morning crafting a tin-foil Asia Cup trophy but forgot to bring it along.

"It's too late to go back and get it," Atif says, with a crestfallen face and a sheepish smile. "But I went for the net sessions yesterday (Saturday), and the players noticed me! I got a thumbs-up from Bhuvi (Bhuvneshwar Kumar)," he beams.

Please don't mind!

The build-up is colourful, loud, and tempers and passions overflow occasionally. But as Khaleed says, "India-Pakistan *hai, yaar. Bura naa maano* (Please don't mind, it is India vs Pakistan)!"

Setting the tone: They are here to just support their teams and players the best they can. • AFP

Dravid tests negative, joins team in Dubai

Dravid. • REUTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

Head coach Rahul Dravid has tested negative for COVID-19 and joined the Indian team before the Asia Cup opener against Pakistan here on Sunday.

The former India skipper didn't travel with the team after testing positive, forcing the board to name NCA head Laxman as India's interim coach.

Since returning positive in the test conducted on August 23, Dravid had been undergoing home isolation.

Serena is the cynosure of all eyes as the final Major gets underway

In the absence of Djokovic, Nadal leads a group of five eyeing the World No. 1 spot

US OPEN

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK

Serena Williams rose from her sideline seat after a break during a training session inside Arthur Ashe Stadium, and as she walked to the baseline at the end of the court covered by shade on a steamy morning, a few voices from the stands called out in unison, "Serena, we love you!"

About to hit some serves in preparation for the first round of the US Open on Monday – and what could wind up being the last singles match of her career – the 23-time Grand Slam champion did not break stride, although she did turn her head in the fans' direction, acknowledging the sentiment with a smile.

Serena is also entered in doubles after she and her older sister, Venus, were given a wild-card entry.

"It's the end of a great career. And hopefully she can finish it off feeling good about herself and enjoying the moment and enjoying the crowd and listening to the people, to everyone, saying how much they love her," said Rennae Stubbs, who won four Slam titles in women's doubles and has been working with Serena, alongside coach Eric Hechtman, since last week.

Missing star

Novak Djokovic is missing a Grand Slam tournament for the second time this season because he is not vaccinated against COVID-19, and – combined with not earning any ranking points for his Wimbledon title – his hold on No. 1 in the ATP rankings has slipped.

Five men have a chance to be No. 1 after the US Open, and Rafael Nadal is among them.

The 36-year-old Spaniard is 19-0 in Majors this season, with trophies at the Australian Open in January and French Open in June, followed by a run to the Wimbledon semifinals in July before withdrawing because of a torn abdominal muscle.

Current No. 1 Daniil Medvedev, the defending US Open champion, Carlos Alcaraz, Stefanos Tsitsipas and Casper Ruud need to reach the September 11 final to have a shot at topping the rankings the next day.

For the first time at a Grand Slam tournament, in-match coaching will be allowed. Coaches must sit in designated courtside seats and only can communicate with players while they're at the same end of the arena.

Also, it will no longer be enough to win seven points to claim a final-set tiebreaker; now a player needs to get to 10.

The US Open joined the three other Majors in agreeing to adopt a uniform system this season: At 6-all in the third set of women's matches and fifth set of men's, a first-to-10, win-by-two tiebreaker will be used to determine the winner.

Monday's picks

Men
1-Medvedev vs Kozlov
4- Tsitsipas vs Qualifier
23-Kyrgios vs Kokkinakis
24-Cerundolo vs Murray
12- Carreño Busta vs Thiem

Women
2-Kontaveit vs Cristian
3-Sakkari vs Maria
Serena Williams vs Kovinic
14- Fernandez vs Dodin
5- Jabeur vs Brengle

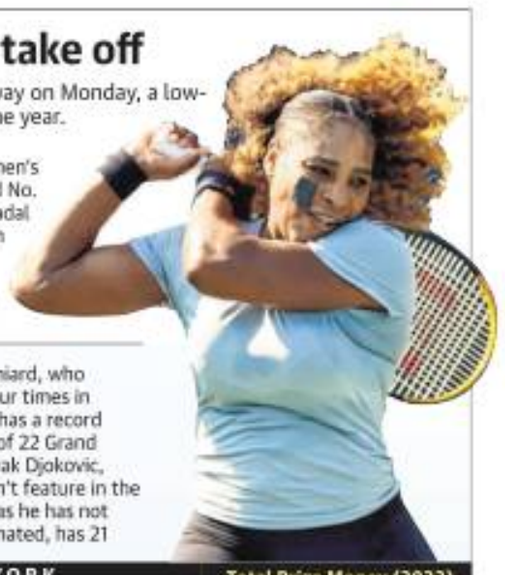
She's set out a good path for all of the WTA players, even the ATP players, to reach their own goals, voice their thoughts, keep fighting for what they believe in.
LEYLAH FERNANDEZ

If you look at everyone that's our skin colour, clearly we followed her. I think I'm a product of what she's done. I wouldn't be here without Serena, Venus, her whole family
OSAKA

Before Serena came along, there was not really an icon of the sport that looked like me. So growing up I never thought that I was different because the number one player in the world was somebody who looked like me. Sometimes being a woman, a black woman in the world, you kind of settle for less. I feel like Serena taught me that, from watching her. She never settled for less
GAUFF

Final Slam ready for take off

As the U.S. Open is all set to get underway on Monday, a low-down on the fourth and final Major of the year.



THE 2022 STORYLINE

- The biggest attraction will be **Serena** who has hinted that this could be her final Grand Slam. The 23-time Major winner will look to bow out in style in front of her home fans
- Though the 40-year-old has not won a Slam since the 2017 Australian Open, a triumph here will pull her level with Margaret Court's all-time record of 24. The Australian won 13 titles before the Open era
- On the men's side, World No. 3 Rafael Nadal will reclaim the top ranking if he wins the title
- The Spaniard, who has won four times in New York, has a record collection of 22 Grand Slams. Novak Djokovic, who couldn't feature in the U.S. Open as he has not been vaccinated, has 21

NEWSMAKERS IN NEW YORK

Most titles: Men: 5: Roger Federer (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008); Pete Sampras (1990, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2002); Jimmy Connors (1974, 1976, 1978, 1982, 1983).

Women: 6: Chris Evert (1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1982); Serena Williams (1999, 2002, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014).

Most consecutive titles: **Men:** Federer 5 (2004-2008); **Women:** Evert 4 (1975-1978)

Youngest champion: Men: Pete Sampras (1990), 19 years and 28 days; Women: Tracy Austin (1979), 16 years, 8 months and 28 days

Oldest winner: Men: Ken Rosewall (1970), 35 years, 10 months and 11 days; Women: Flavia Pennetta (2015), 33 years, 6 months and 18 days

Longest contest: Five hours 26 minutes, Stefan Edberg vs Michael Chang, 1992 men's semifinal

(Records pertain to the Open era from 1968)

Total Prize Money (2022)

$60.1 million, ($57.5 million in 2021)

- The U.S. Open was the first Major to award equal prize money for both the men's and women's singles winners in 1973
- **Reigning champions:** Men: Daniil Medvedev (Rus)
- **Women:** Emma Raducanu (GBR)

COMPILED BY S. DIPAK RAGAV

West Ham beats Villa

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

West Ham won for the first time in the Premier League this season as its 1-0 victory piled fresh pressure on Aston Villa boss Steven Gerrard, while Newcastle's Allan Saint-Maximin rescued a 1-1 draw at Wolves on Sunday.

The results: Premier League: Sunday: Aston Villa 0 lost to West Ham 1 (Fornals 74); Wolves 1 (Neves 38) drew with Newcastle 1 (Saint-Maximin 90).
Saturday: Serie A: AC Milan 2 (Leao 21, Giroud 58) bt Bologna 0.
LaLiga: Almeria 2 (Ramzani 42, Sadiq 55) bt Sevilla 1 (Oliver 30).

India in final

SPORTS BUREAU

India defeated Thailand 25-21, 23-25, 25-18, 25-17 and entered the final of the 21st Asian men's under-20 volleyball championship at Riffa, Bahrain, on Sunday.

It ended a 20-year wait for India which last made the final in 2002 but has never won the Asian title.

The win helped India qualify for next year's FIVB u-21 Worlds.

Verstappen spearheads Red Bull 1-2 at Spa

The Dutchman widens the lead to 93 points over teammate and closest rival Perez who finishes second; Sainz third

BELGIAN GP

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Red Bull's Max Verstappen extended his lead in the Formula One World championship with a crushing victory in the Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday.

Verstappen started 14th on the grid but scorched through the field to cruise to victory ahead of teammate Sergio Perez with Ferrari's Carlos Sainz, who started on pole, in third.

Charles Leclerc, Verstappen's nearest challenger in the title race, struggled in the other Ferrari to find his groove after starting 15th.

A late battle with Alpine's Fernando Alonso saw Leclerc overtake the two-time World champion to snatch fifth, behind the Mercedes of George Russell.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton retired on the opening lap after his Mercedes collided with Alonso's car.

A crash and a cruise: While Hamilton spun out on the opening lap, Verstappen took the chequered flag in style. • AFP

Verstappen has now won nine of this season's 14 races and sits 92 points ahead of Perez who has taken over second spot from Leclerc, who is a further three points behind.

Perez proved a useful buffer in second place although he also had a comfortable afternoon as all the other cars struggled against the Red Bull pace.

Russell's fourth was small compensation for Mercedes after Hamilton's first lap exit.

Alonso called Hamilton an "idiot" over the radio and the Briton later took full responsibility for the collision which occurred when he cut in front of the Spaniard, after both had slipped past Perez on the opening turn.

"Looking back he was in my blind spot, I didn't give him enough space. It is my fault," Hamilton said.

The results:

1. Verstappen (Red Bull); 2. Perez (Red Bull) +17.841; 3. Sainz (Ferrari) 26.886; 4. Russell (Mercedes) 29.14; 5. Alonso (Alpine) 73.256; 6. Leclerc (Ferrari) 74.936; 7. Ocon (Alpine) 75.64; 8. Vettel (Aston Martin) 78.107; 9. Gasly (AlphaTauri) 92.181; 10. Albon (Williams) 101.9; 11. Stroll (Aston Martin) 103.078; 12. Norris (McLaren) 104.739; 13. Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) 105.217; 14. Zhou (Alfa Romeo) 106.252; 15. Ricciardo (McLaren) 107.163; +1 lap: 16. Magnussen (Haas); 17. Schumacher (Haas); 18. Latifi (Williams). **DNF:** Bottas (Alfa Romeo); Hamilton (Mercedes).

Standings: Drivers: 1. Verstappen 284; 2. Perez 191; 3. Leclerc 186; 4. Sainz 171; 5. Russell 170.

Constructors: 1. Red Bull Racing 475; 2. Ferrari 357; 3. Mercedes 316; 4. Alpine 115; 5. McLaren 95.

Top seeds have it easy

Pragnanandhaa off to a winning start

DUBAI OPEN

SPORTS BUREAU

After making waves in online rapid format, R. Praggnanandhaa was back on course to improve his standard rating by making a winning start in the Dubai Open chess tournament at the Sheikh Saeed Bin Hamdan Al Maktoum Hall at the Dubai Chess and Culture Club on Saturday.

The 17-year-old, seeded four, tamed Iran's Reza Mahdavi to be among the 82 first-round winners.

Second seed Arjun Erigaisi, the highest rated among 78 Indians in the 172-player field, had it easy after his Filipino rival Rustum Tolentino did not turn up.

As expected, it was easy for most Grandmasters but 24th seed Arjun Kalyan (rated 2499) struggled to a 79-move draw against Aditya Gampa (1980).

Leading results (Indians unless stated): First round: Alexandr Predke (FIDE) bt Shubh Laddha (Mas); Rustum Tolentino (Phi) gave a walkover to Arjun Erigaisi; Amin Tabatabaei (Iri) bt Ojas Kulkarni; Reza Mahdavi (Iri) lost to R. Praggnanandha; Aradhya Garg lost to Nisipeanu (Ger); Abhijeet Gupta bt Anish Gandhi; Mahitosh Dey lost to S. P. Sethuraman; Samvel Ter-Sahakyan (Arm) bt Vaibhav Raut; Manish Cristiano lost to Raunak Sadhwani. Aravindh Chithambaram bt Parag Mehdi Hasan (Ban).

Praggnanandha.

S. Prasanna lost to Harsha Bharathakoti; P. Iniyan bt Aniruddh Chatterjee; Shardul Gagare bt Harshal Shahi; Aditya Gampa drew with Arjun Kalyan.

Own-goal consigns East Bengal to defeat

TRAU comes from behind to defeat Army Red to notch up its first win

DURAND CUP

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
KOLKATA

ATK Mohun Bagan continued to hold sway over its traditional rival Emami East Bengal as it prevailed by a solitary goal in a Group-B league match of the 131st Durand Cup football at the Salt Lake Stadium here on Sunday.

ATK Mohun Bagan's win was the courtesy of an own goal from East Bengal forward Sumeet Passi in the injury-time of the first half. This was the sixth straight win for ATK Mohun Bagan against East Bengal.

Watched by a capacity crowd of around 65000, the match failed to reach the desired height as the classical opponents struggled to find form.

Oh, no! The East Bengal players are crestfallen after Passi's own goal. • DEBASISH BHADURI

ATK Mohun Bagan enjoyed a slight edge in the early part as it started attacking East Bengal with greater frequency. But the goal remained elusive as the East Bengal defence stood up to the challenge.

ATK Mohun Bagan had the first good opportunity but winger Ashique Kuruniyan, despite clearing the East Bengal defence showing skills, could not slot it in.

The goal finally came in the injury-time when a corner shot taken by Liston Colaco was missed by East Bengal's first line of defence and the ball sneaked through to find Passi and deflected home.

With the win Mohun Bagan is on four points from three matches while East Bengal remained on two points from three matches to virtually see its Durand Cup hopes vanishing.

Sports Bureau reports from Imphal

Two late goals enabled TRAU secure a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over Army Red in a Group-C match at the Khuman Lampak Stadium on Sunday.

Liton Shil put Army Red ahead in the 35th minute.

Baoringdao Bodo drew parity in the 81st minute, while Milan Singh netted the winner in the 89th minute to give TRAU's first win.

With three points from this match, TRAU replaced Army Red, which has two points from three outings, at the third place.

The results: Group B: Emami East Bengal 0 lost to ATK Mohun Bagan 1 (Sumeet Passi 45+2-og).

Group-C: TRAU 2 (Bodo 81, Milan 89) bt Army Red 1 (Liton 35).

Axelsen, Yamaguchi are champions

Dane annexes second title, Japanese defends crown

BWF WORLDS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Denmark's Viktor Axelsen won his second badminton World title beating Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn 21-5, 21-16 in the final here on Sunday. Later, Japan's Akane Yamaguchi retained her women's title in front of her home crowd beating China's Chen Yufei 21-12, 10-21, 21-14.

Masters of the game: While Axelsen sailed through, Yamaguchi had to dig deep on Sunday. • GETTY IMAGES & AP

Imperious!

World No. 1 Axelsen has lost only one singles match this season and was too much for 21-year-old rising star Vitidsarn, who was blown away in the first game. Axelsen, who won Olympic gold last year, also claimed the World title in Glasgow in 2017.

The 28-year-old Dane has been in imperious form this week in Tokyo, reaching the final without losing a single game. The win gave Axelsen his sixth title of the season.

In the women's section, top-seeded Yamaguchi, who won her first World title last year in Huelva, Spain had to dig deep to see off the challenge of Olympic champion Chen. Chen was bidding to become the first player from China to win a women's singles World title since 2011.

The results: Men: Viktor Axelsen (Den) bt Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Tha) 21-5, 21-16. **Doubles:** Aaron Chia & Soh Wooi Yik (Mas) bt Mohd. Ahsan & Hendra Setiawan (Ina) 21-19, 21-14. **Women:** Akane Yamaguchi (Jpn) bt Chen Yufei (Chn) 21-12, 10-21, 21-14. **Doubles:** Chen Qing Chen & Jia Yi Fan (Chn) Kim So-Yeong & Kong Hee-yong (Kor) 22-20, 21-14. **Mixed doubles:** Zheng Si Wei & Huang Ya Qiong (Chn) bt Yuta Watanabe & Arisa Higashino (Jpn) 21-13, 21-16.

KARNATAKA ROUND-UP

Abinav and Tanishka emerge winners

Abinav Prasanna and Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav emerged the boys' and girls' hopes category singles champions respectively at the Karnataka State-ranking table tennis tournament organised by Belagavi District Table Tennis Association.

The results (finals): Hopes: Boys: Abinav Prasanna bt K.B. Prathamesh Kumar 11-6, 11-3, 11-7.

Girls: Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav bt Irene Anna Subhash 11-1, 11-2, 11-3.

Alvas clinches all the titles

Alvas secured the men's, women's and overall championships as the Karnataka State Athletics Championship concluded at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on Sunday.

Goalless draw

FC Bengaluru United FC drew 0-0 with MEG & Center FC in the BDFA Super Division Football League, here on Sunday.

Simran on song

Simran Gurung scored five goals as Misaka United FC blanked Rebels Womens FC 9-0 in the Karnataka Women's League football tournament, here on Sunday.

The results: Misaka United FC 9 (Simran Gurung 11, 17, 33, 34, 45+1, Nisilia Majaw 22, 68, Janvie Haris 52, Liton Jam Rilima Devi 89) bt Rebels Womens FC 0.

Shlok, Bengaluru Blues claim titles

Shlok Hockey Club emerged the men's champion at the D.S. Murthy & Radha Murthy Memorial tournament here on Sunday. In its final three league matches, Shlok defeated DPS, East 8-5, Aristocrat HC 6-4 and Falcon HC 4-3 to finish first. In the girls' section (under-16), Bengaluru Blues HC beat Chinmaya Vidyalaya-A 14-1 to win the title.

Inyouwebelieve vs. Artemis Ignacia

HYDERABAD: Inyouwebelieve and Artemis Ignacia should fight out the finish of the Y. Shanker Rao Memorial Deccan Fillies Championship Stakes (Gr. 3), the first Classic of the Hyderabad Monsoon season to be run here on Monday (Aug. 29).

1 NICE FELLA PLATE (1,600m), Maiden 3-y-o only (Terms) – 2.00 p.m.: 1. Hero Of The East (8) Aksjhay Kumar 56, 2. My Way Or Highway (1) Mohit Singh 56, 3. Path Of Peace (10) Ajeeth Kumar 56, 4. Power Ranger (4) Nakhat Singh 56, 5. Barbet (11) Trevor 54.5, 6. Carnival Lady (2) Gaurav Singh 54.5, 7. Roshanara (6) Suraj Narredu 54.5, 8. Silver Lining (5) B. Nikhil 54.5, 9. Swiss Girl (9) A.A. Vikrant 54.5, 10. This Is me (3) D.S. Deora 54.5 and 11. White Roses (7) P.S. Chouhan 54.5.

1. BARBET, 2. WHITE ROSES, 3. HERO OF THE EAST

2 MAHABUBABAD PLATE (1,200m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 2.35: 1. Silk (3) Santosh Raj 60, 2. Neglect Me Not (4) Ashad Asbar 58.5, 3. Top Diamond (7) Vivek G 58.5, 4. Prime Gardenia (10) G. Naresh 57.5, 5. Big Boy (5) B. Nikhil 54.5, 6. Black Ivy (2) Kuldeep Singh 53.5, 7. Plethora (6) Nakhat Singh 53.5, 8. Muaser (1) Khurshad Alam 53, 9. Euphoria (8) D.S. Deora 52.5 and 10. Wandring Warrior (9) Mohit Singh 52.5.

1. TOP DIAMOND, 2. PRIME GARDENIA, 3. PLETHORA

3 CARTER PRINCESS PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III) – 3.10: 1. Battle Ready (6) Suraj Narredu 62, 2. Dream Jewel (4) Abhay Singh 62, 3. Special And Thong (9) Akshay Kumar 62, 4. Charmer (10) Nakhat Singh 61, 5. First In Line (7) Surya Prakash 60.5, 6. Open Affair (8) Mohit Singh 58.5, 7. Red River (2) R.S. Jodha 57.5, 8. Viggen (5) Kuldeep Singh 57.5, 9. That's My Way (3) A.A. Vikrant 56 and 10. Cephalonia (1) B. Nikhil 52.

1. BATTLE READY, 2. CHARMER, 3. SPECIAL AND THONG

4 RACHAKONDA CUP (2,000m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 3.45: 1. Grand Duke (5) R.S. Jodha 60, 2. N R I Superpower (2) Akshay Kumar 58.5, 3. Winning Streak (6) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Advance Guard (8) Surya Prakash 56.5, 5. Aiza (7) Aneel 54, 6. Dillon (3) Kuldeep Singh 54, 7. Yesterday (9) P.S. Chouhan 54, 8. Ashwa Migsun (1) B.R. Kumar 51 and 9. Queen Blossom (4) B. Nikhil 50.5.

1. ADVANCE GUARD, 2. YESTERDAY, 3. N R I SUPERPOWER

5 Y. SHANKER RAO MEMORIAL DECCAN FILLIES CHAMPIONSHIP STAKES (Gr. 3), (1,600m), (Terms) Fillies, 3-y-o only – 4.25: 1. Aguila (7) Bhawani 56, 2. Arabian Queen (3) Suraj Narredu 56, 3. Artemis Ignacia (5) P.S. Chouhan 56, 4. Ashwa Morocco (10) Antony Raj 56, 5. Beauty Blaze (4) Sandesh 56, 6. Inyouwebelieve (2) Srinath 56, 7. Nugget (9) Ajeeth Kumar 56, 8. Shabelle (6) Trevor 56, 9. Speaking Of Love (1) Akshay Kumar 56 and 10. Star Comet (8) N.S. Parmar 56.

1. INYOUWEBELIEVE, 2. ARTEMIS IGNACIA, 3. BEAUTY BLAZE

6 CARTER PRINCESS PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III) – 5.00: 1. Challenger (9) R.S. Jodha 62, 2. New Hustle (8) B. Nikhil 62, 3. Space Time (7) Kuldeep Singh 61.5, 4. Royal Support (4) Abhay Singh 61, 5. Ashwa Pushkin (3) Santosh Raj 59.5 6. Amalfitana (1) P.S. Chouhan 58.5, 7. Spectacular Cruise (2) Suraj Narredu 58.5, 8. Tales Of A Legend (6) P. Sai Kumar 57, 9. It's My Life (5) G. Naresh 55 and 10. Epsom (10) Afroz Khan 50.

1. AMALFITANA, 2. TALES OF A LEGEND, 3. SPECTACULAR CRUISE

DAY'S BEST: BARBET

Jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6; Mini jackpot: 3, 4, 5 & 6.

Treble (i): 1, 2 & 3; (ii): 4, 5 & 6; Tanala: All races.

Corfe Castle wins Governor's Cup

HYDERABAD: Trainer L. D'Silva's Corfe Castle, ridden by Akshay Kumar, won the Governor's Cup, the main event of Sunday's (Aug. 28) races here.

The winner is owned by Mr. Zavaray S. Poonawalla & Mrs. Simone Poonawalla Pandole rep. Poonawalla Racing & Breeding Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Madai Ramakrishna Reddy & Mr. Tinder Singh Ahluwalia.

1. NORTHERN DANCER PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): **ABLE LOVE** (Akshay Kumar) 1, Miss Little Angel (B.R. Kumar) 2, DRD (Ajeeth Kumar) 3 and Beauty On Parade (A.A. Vikrant) 4. 1/2, Sh and 1-1/4. 1m 13. 64s. ₹16 (w), 12, 15 and 21 (p). SHP: 38, THP: 53, SHW: 14 and 28, FP: 59, Q: 36, Tanala: 188. Favourite: Able Love. Owners: Mr. Maddali Sai Kumar & Mr. Kunwar Digvijay Singh Shekhawat.

Trainer: N. Ravinder Singh.

2. HYPERION PLATE (1,100m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): **EXOTIC DANCER** (Suraj Narredu) 1, Ok Boss (Akshay Kumar) 2, Golden Forza (Kuldeep Singh) 3 and N R I Millennium (Antony Raj) 4. 2-1/2, 1-1/2 and 2-1/4. 1m 7. 75s. ₹25 (w), 13, 13 and 15 (p). SHP: 30, THP: 37, SHW: 13 and 18, FP: 54, Q: 32, Tanala: 139. Favourite: Exotic Dancer. Owners: Mr. Prakash Babu & Mr. Donald Anthony Netto.

Trainer: D. Netto.

3. COLONEL B. SANTOSH BABU MEMORIAL CUP (1,100m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II): **DIVINE CONNECTION** (R.S. Jodha) 1, Bellaque (D.S. Deora) 2, N R I Angel (Antony Raj) 3 and Alpine Girl (Kiran Naidu) 4. 1-1/4, 1-1/2 and Sh. 1m 8. 28s. ₹496 (w), 86, 15 and 19 (p). SHP: 59, THP: 66, SHW: 192 and 21, FP: 3,261, Q: 1,131, Tanala: 27,383.

Favourite: Bellaque. Owner: Mr. Alagappa Murugappan.

Trainer: K. Satheesh.

4. GOVERNOR'S CUP (1,400m), rated 80 and above (Cat. I): **CORFE CASTLE** (Akshay Kumar) 1, Xfinity (Ajeeth Kumar) 2, Premier Action (Afroz Khan) 3 and New Look (Gaurav Singh) 4. 2, Hd and 3. 1m 26. 25s. ₹14 (w), 10, 16 and 12 (p). SHP: 56, THP: 34, SHW: 10 and 28, FP: 69, Q: 73, Tanala: 220. Favourite: Corfe Castle. Owners: Mr. Zavaray S. Poonawalla & Mrs. Simone Poonawalla Pandole rep. Poonawalla Racing & Breeding Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Madai Ramakrishna Reddy & Mr. Tinder Singh Ahluwalia.

Trainer: L. D'Silva.

5. ARTILLERY CUP (1,400m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): **N R I SPORT** (Antony Raj) 1, Royal Grace (Akshay Kumar) 2, By The Bay (Suraj Narredu) 3 and Bangor On Dee (Afroz Khan) 4. 1, 1-1/4 and Nk. 1m 26. 70s. ₹34 (w), 15, 15 and 16 (p). SHP: 38, THP: 65, SHW: 17 and 17, FP: 111, Q: 52, Tanala: 303. Favourite: Royal Grace. Owner: Mr. Ravinder Reddy Male.

Trainer: G. Shashikanth.

6. ASIFABAD PLATE (1,400m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): **MYSTERIOUS ANGEL** (P. Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Pedro Planet (Akshay Kumar) 2, Explosive (Kuldeep Singh) 3 and Indian Temple (Mohit Singh) 4. 3, Hd and 1-1/2. 1m 27. 55s. ₹19 (w), 12, 15 and 23 (p). SHP: 34, THP: 49, SHW: 15 and 22, FP: 81, Q: 58, Tanala: 309. Favourite: Mysterious Angel. Owner: Mr. Kersi Homy Vachha.

Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹23,067 (17 tkts.), 30%: 4,001 (42 tkts.).

Mini jackpot: 12,436 (7 tkts.).

Treble (i): 2,977 (20 tkts.), (ii): 163 (718 tkts.).

Indian cagers face the tough Lebanon test

BASKETBALL

N. SUDARSHAN
BENGALURU

India will be up against a tough Lebanon team in a FIBA Basketball World Cup 2023 Asian Qualifiers match at the Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium on Monday.

India, which will miss Vishesh Bhriguvanshi and Sahaij Sekhon because of injuries, comes into the second of the second-round matches having lost the first against Jordan 64-80.

India is at the bottom of Group E, having lost all five of its matches (four from the first round).

Much will depend on skipper Muin Bek Hafeez's form (15 points against Jordan) and coach Veselin Matic's acumen if the young and inexperienced India is to put up a strong fight and get its first points of the campaign.

Ready to roll: The focus will be on whether the young Indians can outpace the Lebanese. • K. MURALI KUMAR

But Lebanon, silver medallist from last month's FIBA Asia Cup, is a difficult opponent.

It lies second in the table with nine points and, unlike India, has a near full side led by Ali Haider.

Star shooting-guard Wael Arakji, who was adjudged the Most Valuable Player at the Asia Cup, has continued his irresistible form, scoring 24 points in the 85-81 win against Philippines in the previous encounter.

There is confidence in the Indian camp that its youthful outfit has the legs to keep up with the Lebanese. Whether it has the game will be known on Monday.

Australia eases to victory

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOWNSVILLE

Glenn Maxwell smashed an unbeaten 32 off nine balls to take Australia to an easy five-wicket win over Zimbabwe in the first of three ODIs here on Sunday.

Needing 201, Australia reached the target with more than 16 overs to spare to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. All-rounder Cameron Green ripped out the Zimbabwe tail with five for 33 as the visitors collapsed from 185 for four to 200 all out.

The scores: Zimbabwe 200 in 47.3 overs (Taduwanashe Marumani 45, Wessly Madhevere 72, Regis Chakabva 31; Cameron Green 5/33, Adam Zampa 3/57) lost to Australia 201/5 in 33.3 overs (David Warner 57, Steve Smith 48 n.o., Glenn Maxwell 32 n.o; Ryan Burl 3/60). **Toss:** Australia; **MoM:** Green.

Ministry seeks self-application for sports awards

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has invited application from eligible candidates for the sports awards, Arjuna, Dronacharya, Khel Ratna and Life time achievement, in a circular issued on Saturday.

Sept. 20 deadline

The sportspersons can make their own application, without the recommendation of the authorities, through the online portal dbtyas-sports.gov.in by midnight of September 20.

Sports achievements dating from January 1, 2018, till the Commonwealth Games held in Birmingham from July 28 to August 8, will be considered for the Arjuna award.

The circular states that to be eligible for the award, a sportsperson should not only have had consistently good performance for the four years at the international level, but also should have shown 'qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline'.

Usually, the government sports awards are presented by the President on the National Sports Day, August 29, the birthday of hockey wizard Dhyan Chand.

However, exception is made for the years which feature the Olympics, Commonwealth Games and Asian Games.

As per the latest enhancement, the Khel Ratna award carries a cash purse of ₹25 lakh, Arjuna award ₹15 lakh, Dronacharya awards ₹10 lakh for regular, and ₹15 lakh for life-time achievement.

The separate lifetime achievement award also carries Rs.10 lakh cash prize.

LIVE TELECAST

Durand Cup: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 3 & 6 p.m.

Ultimate Kho Kho: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 7.30 & 8.45 p.m.

US Open: Sony Ten 2 & Six (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 8.30 p.m. onwards.

Juggernauts beat Yoddhas

SPORTS BUREAU
PUNE

Odisha Juggernauts defeated Telugu Yoddhas 48-39 in the Ultimate Kho Kho here on Sunday.

Though Yoddhas were in the lead till Turn 3, they failed to sustain the momentum in the final turn as the Juggernauts attackers were on fire and they not only levelled the deficit but claimed a lead in the final few minutes of the game.